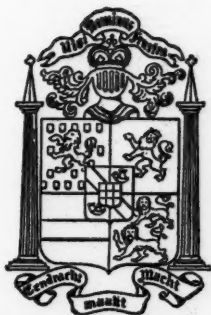


# The REFORMED REVIEW

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The Reformed Church in America

*A Quarterly Journal of the*  
**WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**  
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# The Reformed Review

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## THE MINISTRY, OUR COMMON CONCERN AND RESPONSIBILITY

M. STEPHEN JAMES

We have been summoned to an hour of two-fold celebration. We come to pay honor to the members of this distinguished Class of '56. We rejoice with them in their achievement and pray God's richest blessing upon them as they go forth to their service as ministers of the Word. This occasion has also fittingly been designated as the closing and benedictory hour of this dedicatory year in which has been celebrated the erection of the magnificent building in which the life and work of Western Seminary will have its home. This is indeed a high and holy hour of achievement and accomplishment. I am sure that the rejoicing of our entire Church is mingled with the voices of praise and thanksgiving lifted by those who have been privileged to gather here tonight. I am honored to join in these expressions of congratulation and felicitation, and, both for myself and in behalf of all who, in the work of New Brunswick Seminary share with you in the joy of preparing men for the ministry of our church, to rejoice in your dedications and accomplishments as symbolized here in this graduating class and in this noble building dedicated to the preparation of our ministers for tomorrow.

There is deep unity and compatibility between these two parts of this celebration. They are related to each other and both spring from deep convictions cherished in the heart of our Church. Both of these achievements, as symbolized in this graduating Class and in the new home of the Seminary, are products of strong and prayerful concern. We celebrate them to the deeply moving music of remembrance, fulfillment and prophetic promise. In both of these accomplishments the Church is passionately testifying to her concern for her ministry. They are not two centers of this hour. These are but two aspects of one shining centrality around which our thanksgivings and our dedications are gathered. The happy conjunction of these two commencement events both symbolizes the responsibility we all share that men, and the means for their preparation for the ministry be raised up through the witness, prayers and dedications of the Church. The remembrances of the good providences of God that have brought us to this hour, the grateful consciousness of the dedications of life and treasure symbolized here and our devotion to the continued glorious mission of the Church under whose care these things have been accomplished, should deepen and strengthen in us a concern to discharge faithfully our responsibility in furnishing the Church with a prepared ministry.

### AN ADEQUATE MINISTRY ESSENTIAL TO THE CHURCH

The picture is clear in the Scriptures. It was through the ministry of the Word that the Church was gathered and by that ministry that congre-

gations were nurtured in the faith. This seems to be the foundational provision. Churches came into being to mark the ways of Paul's journeys. In times of difficulty he was continually writing to help them or promising to come to them himself, or he was saying that he would send his sons and helpers in the ministry, Timothy and Titus, to their aid. There is no need to argue or labor this in this company. The Church Reformed according to the Word of God cannot take anything but a serious concern for her ministry. We know that what happens to the ministry will soon happen to the Church. The concern must be just as strong for an authentic ministry as for an adequate number of ministers. Our ministers must be men who are committed and equipped to mediate by their preaching, pastoral nurture and administration to the Church a New Testament understanding of what she is called to be. Therefore, the preparation for the ministry, as well as the call to the ministry, must be a foundational concern and responsibility of the whole Church.

The importance in which this concern has been held has striking illustration in the early years of our church in America. In the first days ministers were sought from the Netherlands. It was not long until the churches on our Eastern seaboard realized that the ministry for their needs must be raised from their midst and be prepared by their own provision for education and training. At first sons of the Church were sent back to Holland for university and theological study. Some of these were lost at sea in making the perilous voyages. Events and great necessity soon taught the congregations that responsibility for the needed ministry could not be borne by separate churches. It must be a responsibility shared by all in a united effort. Thus, the first united and cooperative work of our church in America was the establishing of Queens College, now Rutgers University, and soon thereafter, in 1874, of the first organized Theological Seminary in America in New Brunswick. In this the Reformed Church set the example and pattern for theological education in America. The establishing of Western Seminary followed, giving further evidence of our commitment to this responsibility for an adequate and prepared ministry, and now in this dedication of the new home of your Seminary, we see our latest evidence of that desire and determination that the Church shall be furnished with a strong ministry. We feel the renewal and strengthening of this interest and concern in both seminaries of our church. The Church is increasingly facing the stern fact that more ministers and more adequate means of their training is an undeniable necessity. We cannot be unconcerned when large numbers of churches are without ministers. This is especially meaningful at this moment when new churches are forming and it is clear that an ever larger number of men will be needed. The thanksgivings of this occasion must lead us to stronger determinations and to larger dedications to meet our common responsibility for a ministry equal to the opportunities and the even larger demands of tomorrow. This con-



cern must be felt in each church and we must face our responsibility at the two points so vividly symbolized here tonight, enough men for the ministry and adequate means for their training.

#### MINISTERS FOR THE CHURCHES MUST COME FROM THE CHURCHES

A few years ago one of our small churches in the East was deeply disappointed at failing to secure a minister from the graduating class of New Brunswick. In fact there was a note of complaint in the disappointment to the effect that the Seminary, which they had supported, had somehow let them down. An elder of the church in speaking of the situation, however, saw deeper into the truth of the matter when he said, "We are disappointed but we mustn't complain. We want ministers for our church, but we've never sent any men from our church into the ministry." Another church, in celebrating its 150th Anniversary was quite self-congratulatory in announcing as one of the speakers of the occasion the *one* son of that church who had answered the call to the ministry. That church had used the equivalent of the lifetime work of five ministers. It had taken from the ministry five times as many ministers as it had sent into it. Here is the nub and point of our responsibility for ministers for our church.

The graduating classes of our Seminaries represent, in their members, churches that are sending sons into the ministry as well as calling them from it. In this year's classes of Western and New Brunswick Seminaries about thirty of our churches will be represented. Perhaps when we award certificates and diplomas to the graduates we should also award citations to the churches from which they came. In the main, these churches are those that have taken their responsibility for sounding the call and for seeking men *for* the ministry with prayerful seriousness.

But further, our churches must be concerned not only for men, but for the best and strongest men for ministry. If congregations and consistories exercised as much care in seeking and sending their best sons to prepare for the ministry as they do in seeking paragons of ministerial excellence for their pulpits, they would not find the search for "the right man for our situation" so difficult. When I read the specifications of excellence that churches sometimes list as the desired qualifications for the minister they desire, I often feel like replying, "If you had sent that kind of man to college seven years ago and to Seminary three years ago, we would have that kind of man ready for you now." Industry, commerce, and the professions are combing our colleges and universities for the strongest and ablest students. These are great fields for exercising the Christian vocation. Let us not minimize them. But can we be satisfied with any lesser ability and competence for those called to be ministers? We will only have the kind of men for our pulpits that we send into the ministry from our churches.

## OUR CONCERN FOR ADEQUATE MEANS TO MAKE MEN READY FOR ORDINATION

This hour symbolizes a further common responsibility. We must not only send men into the ministry, but we must, as churches working together, provide means for their education and training for their calling. This building was made possible by the dedicated gifts of people and churches in whose hearts this concern lives. It was erected to help furnish our church with more adequately prepared ministers. Yesterday's provisions will not meet today's and tomorrow's demands.

The Church herself has set high and exacting standards of education and training for her ministers. The demands of our world of today cannot be met by the equipment and training that sufficed for yesterday. These demands, both of our church and of the modern situation, must be met by our total church. The training we require cannot be secured by any other means. This means ever improved teaching, better buildings and equipment. Our student candidates, in preparation for the ministry, are under the care of the Church. Part of this care is seen in the means we provide for their education and training in our Seminaries. No church alone can provide training for the ministry she will need, or for the missionaries she would send. But when each church cares about this enough to provide her rightful share of the cost, it can be done adequately as a glad, cooperative Christian enterprise, and as an expression of the care the Church exercises over her sons who will return to be her ministers.

This interest for students for the ministry and who are "under the care of the Church" can rewardingly be expressed in more intimate, personal ways. We can do more than we have to keep the relationship between the student and his home church, as well as with his classis warm and alive. Recently a student, as his graduation from Seminary approached, received a letter of greeting and congratulation from his home church. He was deeply moved and grateful. As I shared in this, I could not help but think how much it would mean, both to churches and students, if the interest and care of churches and classes could more frequently be made known to their sons in Seminary in some such way.

It is through the life and holy fellowship of the Church that the call of God to the ministry is sounded and heard, and it is under the care and provision of the Church that those who are called are nurtured and prepared for their sacred service. Blessed are the congregations that joyfully claim the privilege of furnishing laborers for the harvest by keeping this concern alive and giving it its rightful place in their prayers, their plans and their dedications.

### THE CONCERN OF MINISTERS FOR THE MINISTRY

May I finally press this concern upon the ministers themselves, and, on this occasion, upon the men of this graduating class. The fires of concern

for her ministers will not burn brightly on the altars of the churches unless they burn hotly in our hearts. The work of ministers is set to inspire and nurture the congregation in those things which ought to concern Christ's Church. Certainly one of those concerns in each church should be for bearing its share of the responsibility for enlisting and training men for the ministry. I cannot conceive of a minister who is not interested in gaining sons for the ministry. However, too often the minister is content to regard this as a personal concern. Our labors in this will bear better fruit when we have enlisted the concerned prayers, efforts and dedications of the Church in this responsibility and privilege. There is no work to which our churches will give themselves more gladly than this, when it is sincerely interpreted to them. I have never heard a member of consistory complain because the minister had pressed the responsibility of support of the Seminary upon them. I have heard many of them say, when belatedly they have learned of their responsibility for sharing in maintaining this Seminary training, "Why have we not been told of this before?"

Of course, beyond teaching and interpretation there must be the exemplification of the glory of the ministry seen in you in the discharge of your office as minister. "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received from the Lord that thou fulfill it." Your ministry will be fulfilled as the Church you serve is inspired to share corporately in all that she has ordained you to do. As under your preaching, the congregation is inspired to proclaim the faith; as from the passion of your pastoral care, the compassion and Christian concern is kindled in the Church for all her members; as in the administration of the sacraments under your office, the sacramental meaning of life is known in the fellowship of your church and as from your vision of the mission of the Church, your people become more deeply involved in the redemptive work of our Lord—as in all these things the manifold and rich meaning of the priesthood of believers is realized where you serve, just in that measure will the office of the minister of the Word be known and seen in its glory. In us as ministers, pray God that the ministry be not blamed, but that it be accepted of God and prized gratefully in his Church.

#### A COMMON CONCERN

Finally, I would look again and earnestly at the two-fold symbol of this high occasion and celebration, these men now prepared to be ordained to the office of minister in our church, and this building with its large equipment dedicated in the celebrations of this past year. In these are symbolized a living and common concern of the Church. These are the fruition of the prayers and the dedications of many known and unknown hearts and homes, and of churches that took upon themselves a sacrificial

share of our common responsibility. Rejoicing in this dedication of life and treasure, let us pray that soon in every congregation of our church the prayers and offerings for tomorrow's ministers will match the need for tomorrow's ministry—in the Church and in the fields still unclaimed for Christ. A common concern is one in which each church shares and bears its part. We pray for a ministry, sufficient and adequate, by which under God the Church will increasingly become in truth what she is in Christ's promise.

## REFORMED CONFESSION TODAY

WILHELM NIESEL

Is what we inherited from our forefathers of any decisive importance for us today? Certainly not, if it is but an old and dead thing. Recent years have seen so many traditional values vanish, that it would not be surprising, if we of the Church also gave up so many treasured things that rested on mere tradition. The word "reformed," however, does not only point to where we came from, but primarily carries an obligation. Right from the start this word was not meant to describe a denomination. In its precise formulation it originally spelled: "reformed after the *Word of God*." That exactly is the essence of what we inherited from our forefathers, that is what they were concerned about:

### I. THE LIVING WORD

1. The Word of God amongst them proved to be a power, a *dynamis*, a kind of dynamite. But not the destructive kind, that we men have at our disposal, but one that heals and brings forth life. This had been St. Paul's vocabulary in describing the great deeds of God: the gospel, proceeding from him, is his dynamite "unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). This power of God makes graves burst open and dead bodies come to life again (I Cor. 6:14). Our forefathers witnessed that. Before their eyes the doctrines taught in the great church of their days proved to be "the speech of them which are puffed up." But "the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (I Cor. 4:18, 19).

2. We have experienced something of a similar nature, when in 1933, in the midst of Nazi philosophy of race, blood and earth, a phrase spoken by our forefathers some four hundred years ago, proved to be powerful amongst us: "Holy Christian Church, of which the sole head is Christ, is born out of the Word of God, she remaineth in the same and doth not harken unto the voice of a stranger." Amid the tangle of strange voices we were privileged to discern *the voice of the shepherd* and to follow it. Then, in the year following it was the whole of the Confessing Church in Germany that proclaimed when gathered for a "witnessing assembly" at Wuppertal Barmen: "*Jesus Christ*, as he is testified to us in the Holy Scripture is *the one Word of God* which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and death." The presence of Christ in his Word was at stake then. That had also been the crucial point with our fathers, when they felt themselves to be called and summoned by Christ in his Word. This only can be and ought to be the concern of our churches today: the presence of our Lord in his proclaimed Word.

3. That this is so should not be considered a matter of course. We are surrounded by dangers on all sides. We are constantly tempted to fail

to hear the Word of the living Christ and instead to yield to other powers. These dangers do not only beset the Church from without. Not only are we constantly under the pressure of mighty forces of propaganda to give ourselves to Western thinking or Eastern ideology. Pitfalls at least as pernicious are also to be found inside the Church. A random example are certain trends in the liturgical movement as we faced them at the Conference on Faith and Order at Lund in 1952. There in the Commission on Ways of Worship the opinion was voiced, that the sermon, being just one part amongst other parts in the order of worship, could possibly be entirely dropped. One seemed to have forgotten that according to the insight of the Reformation Jesus Christ will be amongst his people in his proclaimed Word, and we gather together in the Church to have this kind of an encounter with him. Is there not a widespread opinion even in our congregations that the sermon has outlived its time? We want, however, to learn from our fathers, that it is not beautiful services and a resting place for the soul which matter, but the presence of Christ himself in his Word.

## II. IT IS THE LIVING WORD THAT MATTERS, THEREFORE OUR CONCERN IS HOLY SCRIPTURE.

1. We are directed towards Holy Scripture, because this Word is witnessed to by the prophets and apostles in the Scripture, because they tell us that it was to become flesh and that it did. Erasmus and other people also read the Bible in the time of our fathers. But they did not know what they read, they failed to notice that they were handling dynamite. Even Luther read the Bible in vain for a long time, until one day he was struck by one of its phrases as if struck by lightning. That is why he then said, it is not enough to know the gospel story, rather you know the gospel only when that "voice" comes which tells us, that Christ, his life, teaching, works, death and resurrection belong to us (Preface to the New Testament, 1925). To the same effect later Calvin said: "So to us the Scripture is like a dead and powerless thing, until we have seen that there *God talks with us* and tells us his will" (Sermon on II Timothy 3:16).

2. That is why in the estimation of the Reformers all other books had to step aside. That is why Holy Scripture stands far above all documents of confession the churches have drawn up. Those are only responses to the Word, which our fathers had heard out of Holy Scripture. That is why these confessions can never hold an equal place beside Holy Scripture. The slogan "Bible and Confession," very popular in the time of the struggle between church and state under Naziism, is—strictly speaking—precisely what Roman Catholics affirm. But documents of confession, creeds, are always *under* Holy Scripture. Therefore it is not true, as Lutherans occasionally maintain, that there is a completed creed absolutely formulated once for all. All creeds are constantly challenged by the Scripture. So the

value of a creed is the degree to which it is in accordance with the Scripture. And so the creeds of our fathers help us today to understand and explain the Scripture. If we today want to hear and understand the Word, we must not overlook what our fathers understood to be the burden of Scripture. But on no account should the creeds become a criterion for exegesis of the biblical text. The criterion of Scripture is by Scripture or rather: Jesus Christ as there proclaimed.

3. If, as we are told in the Scripture, it is the living Word which matters, then for us there can be no neutral approach to the Bible in trying to understand it. Scientific and critical method, which pretends to be completely neutral, must dominate us as little as the dogma of the old creeds, when we are about our exegesis of the text. On the contrary, we can meet the demands of scholarship only if our approach is determined by the object we study. In our case: we can deal with the Bible adequately only if we approach it with great expectations, with the hope, that the text itself will open and that "voice" will speak to us, which drowns out all other voices. Another way of saying it: when studying the Bible we must not forget that we are baptized. We should indeed remember that fact, trusting that the same Lord, who in baptism has laid his hand on us, again this day through his witnesses will prove the Living God.

### III. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LIVING WORD IS THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S GIFT AND GOD'S CLAIM.

1. Why did this concern for Holy Scripture not remain a matter for theologians in the time of the Reformation? At that time why did it turn into a movement of peoples, that swept all the countries of Europe? The reason was this: people felt that this book radiated a power that did not destroy but help. People felt that they were liberated, not only from the oppression of the Roman confessional but from the "godless bondage of this world." It is with these words that we again confessed in 1934. Because we felt that from this Word we received true liberty in the midst of a totalitarian state. That is the reason why it was possible at that time to give the title, "And They Praised God," to a volume of testimony by imprisoned laymen and pastors. The living Word of Jesus Christ is indeed the only comfort for life and death. Indeed comfort for death? How many of our forefathers have given the answer and proved this to be so by the sacrifice of their lives! In our generation a man like Paul Schneider, pastor of a Reformed church in the Rhineland, testified this through his martyrdom as a messenger of Christ at Buchenwald camp. And Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the famous theologian of the confessing church, has given magnificent expression to this truth, when he was awaiting death:

O come now, sublimest of feasts on the road to freedom eternal,  
Death, undo then the chains and the walls that make us a prison,  
Of our body that passes and our soul's sad delusion,



That at last we behold what down here was barred from our eyes,  
Freedom, thou wert what we looked for through order and action and suff'ring.  
Dying, we see now thy face and know: it is that of our God.

2. The joy about redemption proved to be sincere, for people felt God's claim and knew themselves to be bound in his service, a "free, grateful service to God's creatures." The good news set our fathers going. It called them to responsible action in everyday life.

We are liberated by Christ not just for ourselves but for the common good and its service. In this service we are no longer committed to any specific philosophical, ethical, political or economic system. This does not mean that a Christian may not be a member of a secular organization or party, but he should examine his status daily and question himself whether in that position he is still completely subject to our Lord Jesus Christ, who has made us his property. Being under his gracious regimen, we no longer need to perform duties as servants to this world. Liberated by him we may on this earth serve men for his sake, who himself has served sinners without submitting to sin.

Nor are we subject to history and events, neither to those that happened once, that is to say, to tradition, nor to those that are happening in our days. We are of course determined by tradition and influenced by our times, but these bonds cannot bind us ultimately. Our ultimate loyalty is to the Lord of history, who leads history to *his* destination in spite of human conceit and error.

3. Being freed from false loyalties, we may serve the Lord amongst his creatures knowing that he will accept that service. At this point Calvin's teaching of the justification of works is of great importance to us. The Reformer points out that God, for Jesus Christ's sake, will suffer us to show our fragmentary obedience and the various steps we make in order to serve him in gratitude. It is because we are his children through Christ that God recognizes our works and, like a father, does not reject the imperfect offerings of his children. For the sake of Jesus Christ our incomplete service in this world is not just nothing but does count in the eyes of God.

#### IV. IT IS THE LIVING WORD THAT MATTERS, THEREFORE THE CHURCH IS A CHURCH OF CONGREGATIONS.

1. The comforting and demanding Word of God binds close together all those that serve. The Word can do this, because it not only liberates unto service, but also supplies the power for service. This group of servants, called and supplied by God, is the Church of Jesus Christ. It is "the abundance itself of the gifts of grace and the recipient of such gifts" (Schniewind). The Church is the body of Christ, which is called into being by the living Word and its gifts of the Spirit. Our fathers were



pointed into a particular direction by the way in which the Apostle Paul used the metaphor of the Body of Christ. They once more saw that not only a group of dignitaries but every Christian receives a gift from the Holy Spirit in order to use it for the furthering of the Church. Our fathers therefore wrote into the Heidelberg Catechism: "that everyone should know himself to be bound to use his gifts for the good of the other members, willingly and with rejoicing" (Question 55). We had of course known and learnt this article of the catechism, but it was only later, in a time and place re-echoing with principles of so-called leadership, that we came to realize the fundamental importance of it. Christ again proved the Living One, when it was given to us to proclaim at the Barmen assembly in 1934: "The Christian Church is the community of brethren in which Jesus Christ, present as its Lord, acts in Word and Sacrament through the Holy Spirit."

This being so, the Church cannot be the demesne of a bishop nor the field of action for any one who wants to exercise his passion for leadership. And the congregation accordingly is not the pastor's own, it is not an instrument by which to express one's personality. Never is the Church of Christ an object of our activities. It is the Body of Christ, of which everybody, whosoever he may be, is a member. We know that the Lord does not overlook anybody, he gives a gift of his Spirit to everyone for the service of the common good. But he alone is the only Head.

2. At this point the message of Jesus Christ does remodel our whole life: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister . . . . Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20: 25-28). When Jesus washed the feet of his disciples he showed that he is the true deacon, that is, the willing servant beyond compare. This office of his was certified by the offering of his life on the cross for us all.

We, being his people, partake in his office. He himself will see to it, that in his Church this service does not cease to be rendered. He does so by not granting everything to a single person, by not permitting the domination of an individual, by distributing the gifts of his Spirit in such a way, that each of us depends on the service rendered by others. We cannot exist each by himself, we need the service of our brother. It is especially true in our spiritual life that we depend on fraternal help.

So under the Living Word, which our fathers once heard, congregations became of age and with responsible ministers, teachers, elders and various other offices grew to maturity. This happened again and again where the living Word proved powerful. Whenever there is a feeling that

there is not enough willingness to serve, we can be sure it is because we do not give way to the Word and do not trust its promises.

V. IT IS THE LIVING WORD THAT MATTERS, THEREFORE THE WHOLE WORLD IS AT STAKE.

1. The one and only man that ever truly served, God has raised to be Lord of all the world and "hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1:22). This is what our fathers saw anew, that the living Word Jesus Christ is "the head of his Christian Church, through which the Father governs all things" (Heidelberg Catechism, Question 50). Our task therefore is "to proclaim the message of the free grace of God unto all the people." Our Lord Jesus Christ is dealing with the world, the world is the object of his love. It is therefore the business of his Church to proclaim the news of the liberating kingdom of Christ on all the streets and at every corner. It must tell of the prince of peace who "with righteousness shall judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked" (Isa. 11:4). Therefore the Church must not withdraw into a ghetto in order to cultivate there a self-contained life of quiet worship. This was our special temptation, when at the time of the church struggle in Germany the pressure became stronger and stronger. Here we can learn something from Calvin. Look through his correspondence and you will find that his contacts extended to almost all of the important statesmen of his day. Of course, he did not envisage a political conception such as are behind political programs. But he did not leave politics just be politics, he did bother politicians. He felt responsible and reminded the statesman "of God's kingdom, of God's commandment and righteousness." All of them should become subjects of the Lord Jesus Christ and suffer him to help them.

2. It is here on this earth that the decision is made for or against God's kingdom. Wherever hungry people are fed, thirsty people are given a drink, the homeless are invited, the sick are visited and the imprisoned are not left to themselves, there something happens that counts before God. In the eyes of the world those are not mighty deeds, but it is the only way in which the world can be healed. Where in a world of hatred "forbearance is made known unto all men" because "the Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:5), where peace, mercy and righteousness are followed there the blessing of God will be also. (Matt. 5:7). Those who would rather in this world leave these objectives to the expert are lazy servants letting that pound be idle, which God has entrusted to them. Our fathers knew very well the difference between the kingdom of God and that of this world, but out of this good piece of knowledge they did not construct a theory which would minimize their responsibility and their true service. Jesus

Christ, found to be living in his Word, again and again pointed them to their places of service in this world and in all spheres of life. The living Word has summoned us to be his faithful and obedient Church, so we in turn have to call the world by word and deed to render homage to Christ. Let us not say: this is impossible. That Reformed pastor, Paul Schneider, did not cease to do so, with words of reprimand and comfort shouting from his concrete cell down to the camp square until his mouth was silenced. Dietrich Bonhoeffer who also paid the highest price in giving his life in that service has described our task by these bright and clear words:

Be joyful and say:  
Justice and Faith  
And God's new Day!

This then is "Reformed Confession Today," reformed but also ever reforming.

## THE TASK OF THE CHURCH IN THE PAGAN WORLD

JOHN H. PIET

### 3. THE METHOD

In a charming book about African pygmies, called *Madami*, the author tells of the adventures she and her husband had during the eight years they lived with these primitive people of the Congo. One of these had to do with an okapi or forest giraffe.

The okapi is the rarest inhabitant of the Ituri Forest, and as such, the author's husband wanted to have one. Accordingly, he offered a high reward to the pygmies, who finally succeeded in capturing one of these young animals.

The afternoon of the capture, the African boys gathered a huge load of leaves and dumped them in one corner of the specially built stockade. The okapi sniffed at them but would not eat.

Both the animal keeper and the author's husband were helpless and while they were racking their brains, Sale, one of the pygmy elders walked up. Sale listened politely and a bit bashfully, as though it were the height of nonsense for all these people to be puzzled by something so simple.

"You do not put your bowl on the ground to eat, do you?" he asked the animal keeper.

"No," muttered the animal man.

Sale thereupon walked into the forest and a minute later returned with a length of vine, which he tied across the top of the enclosure. Then he went inside and strung up the leaves as if he were putting out the washing.

The okapi stepped gingerly out of the far corner, smelled the leaves overhead, wrapped his long tongue around one and ate it. He moved along the vine, neatly collecting his food, as pleased as if he were browsing in the jungle (*Reader's Digest*, Oct. '54).

This, in parabolic form, is the method of evangelism. The bread of life must be placed before the world in such a way that they will eat it. This means that the gospel must be couched in the cultural pattern and thought-forms of those who are to receive it, and not in the terminology of those who believe.

It means further that the message can never be stereotyped but that each evangelist must adapt to the particular situation in which he is placed. There is an American Digger Indian proverb which says,

In the beginning, God gave to every people a cup of clay,  
And from this cup they drink their lives.

The nectar of God's Word must appeal to each man in his own way before he is tempted to drink.

Actually, the word "method" is not the best word. It carries overtones of "technique" and "automation," words which are alien to the New Testament. My only justification in using it is to enable you to remember: The Message, the Men, and the Method.

Be that as it may, the method of evangelism described above is the method of Jesus. Jesus begins where people are, and from that point, he leads them to where they should be. In fact, he describes himself to Thomas by saying,

"I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

### I. I AM THE WAY.

When Jesus says that he is the Way he uses the Greek word for a road or a travelled path. A road begins where an individual finds himself and leads, if he will follow, to an end. He may not know the exact description of that end, but none-the-less, by faith he places his feet upon the path and makes his way in a given direction.

Before a person is willing to take to the Christian road, he must find the way appealing, particularly at the point where he joins it. If he is in the darkness of ignorance, he must see, however faintly, that Jesus the Way leads to fuller and more adequate knowledge. If he is in the valley of sin, he must see that the Way leads to the higher ground of moral living. If like the rich young ruler, a person finds himself in the luxury of self-corrupting wealth, Jesus the Way begins with self-surrender and the command, "Sell what you have, give to the poor, and come, follow me" (Mark 10:21).

To Andrew and John, Jesus was a teacher superior to the Baptist. To the wedding party at Cana, he was the perfect guest. To Nicodemus, he was a person available for consultation at night. And to the Samaritan woman he was a Jewish pilgrim thirsty enough to ask for water from a despised woman desperately in need of unadulterated friendship.

To the invalid at Bethesda, Jesus was the way to health. To the hungry on the shore of Galilee, he was bread. To the man born blind, light. To Lazarus, the resurrection and the life. To the Passover pilgrims, the pantomime of a king riding on a donkey. To the celebrants in the Upper Room, a slave with a towel. And to all men, he is a nail-pierced, bleeding body upon a Cross.

The fact is, Jesus the Way begins in Bethlehem where God became flesh and dwelt among us.

After all, this is what incarnation (*en-karnos*) means: God coming down to the level of man in order that man might be led up to God.

The necessity of the incarnation was brought home to me one day in an Indian village. An officer of the World Christian Endeavor Union was invited to this congregation of illiterates to speak to them. He could not talk Tamil; so the village pastor had to translate for him.

His level of thought was far above the audience; so that when the effects of "due respect" wore off, the people became restless. This was aggravated by a downpour of rain which seeped through the thatched roof.

The children were more restive than the adults, because they did not have clothes on whereas the older ones did. Cold rain on bare bodies made them shiver and want to escape to that part of the church which offered more protection.

In order to quiet the congregation, the speaker mentioned their restlessness and wove the same into an illustration of man's reaction to God. His reprimand was couched in language which the pastor found impossible to translate. Accordingly, he ignored what was said, carried on from the thought previous to the illustration, and elaborated on that.

Is this not a picture of what God faced prior to the coming of Christ. God made repeated attempts to mediate his message through historical events, through miracles, and the prophets. Some of it was transmitted, but there was always the translator between God and his people. And so God, in the person of Jesus, decided to speak man's language in a way so intelligible that anyone who had ears and would listen could understand.

The way of God is the way of the evangelist. It is likewise the way of the church, which is the consignee of the message.

In other words, both the evangelist and the church whom the evangelist represents must be willing to follow the method of the Master who "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7).

This implies that the message must be brought down to the level of men. It likewise means that the best is none too good in this effort; since God in Christ "spared not his own Son but delivered himself up for us all."

If evangelism has failed, it is because the church has not been willing to do this. Here we enter a vicious circle. Because the church is unwilling to give of her best, she is thereby unable to talk to man in his rebellion as she should.

Let me illustrate. One of the first reactions of converted people in non-Christian countries is to withdraw from the world in which they live. This is sometimes forced on them by their relatives and friends who will have nothing to do with them after they become Christians. It is sometimes the response of the individual himself as he reacts against his non-Christian environment. The danger in both cases is that the worshipping congrega-

tion moves farther and farther away from the world, oftentimes to the point where it does not know how the world acts or how it thinks.

This, on the mission field, is known as the compound mentality, because the convert is protected, sheltered, and completely withdrawn from his original environment and placed behind the walls of the mission.

Two things happen if this is allowed to go on. The first is that the church turns in upon itself. What makes matters more complicated is that this is encouraged by such admirable motives as better buildings for worship, a higher trained leadership, and a more efficient church program—all of which are good in themselves but highly dangerous.

In this state of affairs, the church is tempted to keep the best for itself.

The emphasis upon the internal activities of the church reached such a point in my own mission several years ago, that an individual who passed the Seminary course and who was given a Licentiate of Theology degree was entitled to become a pastor. The person who failed joined the mission pay-roll as an evangelist!

Would to God that that day were dead! Recently, however, one of our Indian pastors was relieved of his responsibilities for good and sufficient reasons, only to be transferred to another mission area—you have guessed it—as an evangelist!

I am quite sure that this is not what Jesus meant when he said, "I am the way." John 3:16 tells us that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. If that is God's way for the redemption of the world, can the way of the church be anything less?

At this point, let us strike a balance. The internal life of the church is important. The external outreach of the church is likewise important. Neither takes precedence over the other.

Let us define the internal activity of the church as worship and the outreach as work. Both of these drive shafts must work in harmony if the wheels of the Kingdom are to keep moving.

Worship and work are like the two parts of the Sanskrit word "faith" which literally means "to breathe." The two component parts of the one word are "inhalation" and "exhalation" which taken together spell life. Stop either process and life ceases. So too with the church. The church worships in order to gain strength for work, and after it works, it feels the need for worship.

Several years ago, there was a conference on evangelism in Nagpur, India. For two days, a Quaker pressed the point that the church in India was not ready for evangelism. It needed to be revived first.

At the end of the second day, I put a question to this Quaker, saying, "Would you please tell us when the church is ready for evangelism? Before you answer question number one, however, I would like to have you

answer question number two: If any church says it is ready for evangelism by virtue of having said so, has it not disqualified itself by falling into the sin of spiritual pride?"

This is more than clever dialectic. It is basic to the life and witness of the Body of Christ. Begin where you will, the church can only find renewal in evangelism and outreach, and through evangelism and outreach it will soon seek renewal.

When God appointed Ezekiel to speak to the people, the prophet says, "The Spirit lifted me up, and took me away . . . Then I came to them of the captivity at Telabib, that dwelt by the river Chebar, and to where they dwelt; and I sat there overwhelmed among them seven days."

He then goes on to say, "And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of Jehovah came to me . . ." (3:12ff).

The word of God came because Ezekiel was on the way.

## II. I AM THE TRUTH.

Jesus the Way leads to Jesus the Truth—the progression is natural, along the way *to* the truth.

Truth in the Bible does not come to us as a logical deduction. It comes to us as a Person.

When Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth" (17:7) John intends us to read this in the light of what he has written before: "The word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. . . . For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (1:14, 17).

Pilate looked for truth as an explanation within himself. Meanwhile, Truth stood before him in the Person of his Prisoner.

Several years ago, a condemned murderer in Sing Sing lay beside a little girl who was dying of leukemia. The only possible cure for her was healthy blood; but it could not pass through a tube. It had to be given vein to vein (*God's Good News*, Kennedy, p. 90).

This is the Truth to which Jesus the Way leads:

There is a fountain filled with blood  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;  
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains.

## III. I AM THE LIFE.

Jesus, the Way, leads to Jesus the Truth, and the Truth, if accepted, leads into Jesus the Life.

The progression is complete: from—to—and into.

Life for John was never something which came to a man naturally. It always came supernaturally as a gift from God.



As such, it is eternal, and so for John, it makes little difference whether he speaks of life or life eternal. For him, they are one and the same. He says, "He that has the Son has life. He who has not the Son has not life" (I John 5:12).

#### IV. NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER BUT BY ME.

It is at this point that the non-Christian becomes restive, particularly the Hindu. He even tells us that we are narrow-mindedly exclusive. After all, he as a Hindu is so generous that he allows each man the "god-of-his-choice." His favorite analogy is that even as all rivers eventually end in the ocean, so every religious path will ultimately lead to God.

Early in my missionary experience, I was teaching a class of Hindu lads in Voorhees College. We came to John 14:6 and a bright young Brahmin boy raised his hand and said,

"Teacher, we Hindus can accept the claims of Jesus if you will only change one word. All you have to say is, 'I am a Way, a Truth, and a Life,' and then omit the last phrase which says, 'No one comes to the Father but by me,' and we will all be Christians."

What this Brahmin lad failed to see is that he as a Hindu made the same claim on the basis of rebirth or transmigration. Rebirth or reincarnation according to the Hindu is the passage of the soul from one body to another until final release for the soul in the All-Soul or God is realized.

This particular student was a devotee of Siva. Accordingly, we turned to his sacred scripture, namely, the Siva-jnana-Siddhair where it says,

"It is a great blessing to be born in a land where savages do not inhabit but the study of the four vedas reigns supreme. Escaping birth (or transmigration) among the lower classes of the human race, rare is it that one should be fortunate to be born among the people privileged to perform religious austerities, and to profess the Saiva Siddhanta religion without falling into the ways of other creeds" (90).

The Siddhair goes on,

"Was it not the purpose, when souls were endowed with human birth, that they should, with their mind, speech and body, serve Hara who is anointed with the five-fold products of the cow? The celestials themselves descend on the earth and worship Hara. Dumb men, alas! who roam hither and thither, in the fleshly frame, understanding not anything of this higher life" (92, J. M. Nallaswami Pillai, 1913, p. 191).

Or take a comparable claim made by the other major Hindu religious group, the worshippers of Vishnu. In the 17th chapter of the Bhagavad-gita, Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu says,

"Know me, O Arjuna, to be the eternal seed of all existences. I am the intelligence of the intelligent; I am the splendour of the splendid" (10).

"But temporary is the fruit gained by these men of small minds. The worship-

pers of the gods go to the gods, but My devotees come to Me—I who am the intelligence of the intelligent, the splendor of the splendid" (23).

"At the end of many lives, the man of wisdom resorts to Me, knowing that Vasudeva, (the Supreme) is all that is. Such a great soul is very difficult to find" (19).

In other words, Kirshna claims to be ultimately all that is. One may worship other gods like Brahma, Siva, or Jesus.

Some Hindu scriptures estimate that it takes as many as 84,000,000 different transmigrations for one soul to realize its ultimate destiny, but the path to progress and fulfillment is ultimately one and one alone.

The point I am trying to make is that Christianity is not alone in its claim to exclusiveness. Would it appear arrogant, then, if at this juncture I took umbrage with as gifted a scholar as Arnold Toynbee, who in the January 1956 issue of the *Union Seminary Quarterly* says,

"I would say that we should try also to purge our Christianity of the traditional Christian belief that Christianity is unique . . . .

"The vein of exclusiveness and intolerance in Christianity . . . is a congenital feature which is part of Christianity and also of Islam's heritage from Judaism . . . .

"However hard it may be to purge of its exclusive-mindedness, it seems imperative for Christians to achieve this spiritual feat" (p. 7).

Toynbee at this point sounds very much like a henotheist who is able to believe in a god for himself, but not to the exclusion of other gods for other people.

When Benhadad said, "Jehovah is a god of the hills, but he is not a god of the valleys" (I Kings 20:26-30) he soon discovered that God is God—both of the hills and the valleys.

I wonder if Toynbee ever stood in the Mosque of Omaiyyid in Damascus which is still the capital of Benhadad's Syria? This mosque is the most important tourist attraction in Damascus today, and it ranks in magnificence with the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, and in sanctity with the mosques of Mecca and Medina.

As one stands in the Mosque of Omaiyyid, his mind goes back to the temple of Rimmon where Naaman deposited his "two mules' burden of earth" (2 Kings 5:18), because the mosque stands on the same site. When the Greeks came to power, the temple of Rimmon gave way to that of Jupiter. Later during the time of Constantine, the temple of Jupiter became sacred to Christ and was dedicated to John the Baptist, whose head it was said to contain in a casket.

There are two inscriptions in the Mosque of Omaiyyid placed there by Arcadius who ascended the throne in 395. One of them reads, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him." The other says, "Thy Kingdom, O

Christ, is an everlasting Kingdom." No sooner has one read these inscriptions in the guide book than the call of the muezzin from the minaret sounds clear reminding the faithful that the hour of prayer has come.

It is not that we are arrogantly exclusive. It is simply that Jesus told us,—“No one comes to the Father but by me.”

#### V. THE METHOD RELATIVE TO RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CHURCHES.

There is one other problem that we should discuss relative to method and that is the relation of the Reformed church to the indigenous churches on our foreign mission fields.

In Arabia and in Africa, the Reformed Church still functions very largely as a mission. In Japan, India, and among overseas Chinese, however, it is in alliance with autonomous and independent churches. As such, what is their position and what is ours?

In the first place, we must be thankful to God that these churches on the field have come into being. Perhaps they may not be the kind of churches we would idealistically want; but they are churches, none-the-less. As such, we must believe that the Holy Spirit has been at work in them just as we believe He has been at work among us.

In the second place, we must remind ourselves that these churches, or parts of them at least, came into being by virtue of our missionary endeavour. As such, we have a continuing responsibility towards them as long as they remain in need.

Thirdly, we must be aware of the fact that as a sending church we are wealthy in comparison, and that by means of money it is so easy to do the wrong thing.

Although the church functions as a unit, it is well to remember the dual function we mentioned earlier, namely, worship and work. Only this time let us change the terminology to Christian nurture and evangelism.

Christian nurture, in short, consists of that teaching and training the church gives her people for useful service, social and spiritual uplift in order to “equip the saints” for their calling in the world. The task of evangelists is, as Dr. John Mackay says, “. . . to be preachers of the Gospel, ‘the Good News’ regarding the Crucified and Risen One. It is so to present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost that men shall come to put their trust in God through him, to accept him as their Saviour, and follow him as their King, in the fellowship of his Church” (*Theology Today*, January 1953).

If this distinction is valid, it seems but right to say that no church has a continuing responsibility for the program of Christian nurture of another church.

By the same token, no church is responsible for the evangelistic mission of another church. However, whereas nurture and government are the

prerogative of each individual church, evangelism is a *common* task to all churches. Hence, it is in this realm that the efforts of the churches should and can combine for the self-respect, good, and fulfillment of all.

This means that the receiving churches should not lean too heavily upon the sending church for funds which are used primarily for Christian nurture. It also means that both churches should contribute their share for the common task of evangelism.

It may be that one church has more money than it has men. It may be that another church has more men than it has money. What difference does it make when churches work together for the conversion of the world if they work as man to man making whatever contributions they can. In Christ there is no Jew or Gentile, bond or free, but all are one in him.

After all, the problems of the Japanese are our problems even as the problems of the United States are those of the Christian Indian. There is no room for paternalism in the church. We do not treat each other as Africans, Arabians, or Chinese. We are brothers striving side by side for the hope of the gospel.

The question of method is basic, if for no other reason than that of urgency.

The human family consists of two billion, two hundred million people. The awful reality is that twenty million people are born into the world every year, but only one and one-half million non-Christian people are being evangelized each year. It is a cold and sobering fact that not two percent of the world's population are evangelical believers. More than half of our fellowmen have never once heard the Gospel of our holy Redeemer; and he has said, "no one comes to the Father but by me." What right have we to hear the name of Jesus Christ every day of the week while so many others have never heard that name even once?

It was Dr. Simpson who wrote the following lines,

A hundred thousand souls a day  
Are passing one by one away  
In Christless guilt and gloom;  
O Church of Christ what wilt thou say  
When in the awful judgment day  
They charge thee with their doom?

Since Dr. Simpson wrote those lines, the figure has become a hundred and twenty thousand people a day, more than half the communicant membership of the Reformed Church in America!<sup>1</sup>

The way some people act, one would think the day of missions is done. The mission of the church is not done. Jesus still says to his disciples, as he has always said, "Come, follow me."

<sup>1</sup>General Synod Report, 1954.

## THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHRISTIANITY AND CULTURE IN THE TEACHING OF HERMAN BAVINCK

BASTIAN KRUIITHOF

John Livingstone Lowes wrote a fascinating literary-detective work, *The Road To Xanadu*, to reveal what elements had entered the mind of Coleridge for the creating of two poems. A study of Bavinck's thoughts on Christianity and culture uncovers many sources that fed the sweep of his mind and heart.

Bavinck was first of all a theologian as his four-volume *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek* and his chairs at Kampen and Amsterdam testify. But he was a theologian with a philosophic, aesthetic, and practical bent. His thirst for knowledge is evident from his carefully prepared and heavily documented works whether they be intended for the class room, the popular lecture platform, or publication.

His scholarship is marked by thoroughness, honesty, and fairness. He advised his students, "I do not ask that you solve the problem, but that you posit it clearly." Again and again he runs the whole gamut from the earliest Greek thought to the positivism of his day, from the Old Testament to contemporary Christian thinking. He was moved by a passion for a "*wetenschap*," that is, science in its deepest and broadest sense as organized knowledge.

His appreciation of the best that has been thought, said, and done is evident from these words: "Without doubt we may enrich ourselves with the glorious forms of beauty which Greece and Rome have saved for us. For all is ours if we are Christ's; not only Paul and Cephas and Apollos but also Homer and Horace, Demosthenes and Cicero."<sup>1</sup> He also used the phrase: "the divine Plato."

He was disturbed by sects and the sectarian spirit, the negativism of Anabaptism which separated creation from re-creation, nature from grace, and preferred separation to reformation.<sup>2</sup> He would agree with Richard Niebuhr in calling the position of anticultural Christianity both necessary and inadequate. The distinction between Christ and Caesar, revelation and reason, God's will and man's is essential, but redemptive revelation is aimed also at the transformation of culture in its rich and varied fields.

Bavinck was not, however, a thinker and dreamer in an ivory tower. He was concerned about relating Christianity to the whole realm of culture. In that great field God is also revealing himself and his purposes with man and the world. "God is busy doing great things in these times."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*De Welsprekendheid*, pp. 78, 79.

<sup>2</sup>*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, IV, pp. 314, 315.

<sup>3</sup>*Modernisme en Orthodoxie*, p. 11.

An exhaustive study of his works acquaints us with the Christian Approach to the Problem, Sources of the Christian Understanding of the Problem, the Roots of Culture, How Culture is Preserved, and the Future of Culture, but also with scientific and practical concern as to the areas of culture such as Theology, the Philosophy of Revelation, the Psychology of Religion, the Natural Sciences, Evolution, the Meaning of History, Beauty and Aesthetics, Principles Governing Society, the Family, the Position of Women, Education, Politics, and War.

It has also been rewarding to set his teaching within the framework of contemporary thinking on the subject.<sup>4</sup>

In this article we can deal only with a fundamental fragment of his thinking, trusting that from it we can gather something of the comprehensiveness of Bavinck's teachings in which the positive and irenic are well-balanced.

### I. TOWARDS A DEFINITION

"The well-known preacher, J. Christian Blumhardt, once said that man needs a twofold conversion, first from the natural to the spiritual life and then from the spiritual to the natural." With this paradoxical statement Bavinck begins his lecture on "Revelation and Culture."<sup>5</sup>

It is this double conversion that pictures the Christian's relation to, and attitude towards, culture. That first conversion is man's spiritual ascent after his descent into sin. The spiritual life tends upward. "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" is not merely an echo from the Old Testament but is the cry of the Christian heart as well.

However, man is living in a world rich with good things from God. Not only his religious but also his cultural task lies there. His conversion from the natural must follow from his conversion to the spiritual. Neither may be separated from the other. Religion and culture go together. Cultus and culture are sisters bound by love like Martha (culture) and Mary (cultus).

The right to culture and the duty to it are spoken by God: "Be ye fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and subject it."

Culture exists because God gave us the power to rule the earth, to form it for ownership and as an organ of personality, to turn the whole riches of created life, spiritual, moral, and natural into a pure organism, and to rule it.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Vide: Cochrane's *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 1940; T. S. Eliot's *The Idea of a Christian Society*, 1939, and *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, 1948; C. Dawson's *Religion and Culture*, 1947, and *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, 1950; Emil Brunner's *Christianity and Civilization*, 1948; John Baillie's *What Is Christian Civilization?*, 1945, and *The Belief In Progress*, 1951; H. R. Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture*, 1951; and Emile Cailliet's *The Christian Approach to Culture*, 1953.

<sup>5</sup>*Wijsbegeerte der Openbaring*, p. 207.

<sup>6</sup>"Het Rijk Gods Het Hoogste Goed" in *Kennis en Leven*, pp. 49, 50.

All culture is a power whereby man rules over nature. Art and science are a triumph of the spirit over matter. But culture like cultus must be rooted in the same principle. The relationship to God and to man must bear the same character and must be ordered by the same moral law.

Although culture is rooted in creation, in a sense it began in earnest after the fall. Culture in itself is by no means sinful or wrong. In Genesis there is evidence of cultural progress which is not condemned. Scripture distinguishes proper use from abuse. Bavinck disagrees with Bishop South who spoke of Aristotle as the rubbish of Adam and of Athens as the rudiments of Paradise.

It is only Christianity that gives the proper interpretation of religion and culture. Creation and re-creation cannot stand over against each other as higher and lower. They are both glorious works of the triune God. "All our modern civilization, art, science, literature, ethics, jurisprudence, society, state, politics are leavened by religious, Christian, supernatural elements and still rest on the foundation of the old view of the world."<sup>7</sup> The Christian faith touches on all sides of human life, lets its influence be felt, and sets its stamp on all elements of culture.

It does this because Jesus came not to condemn the world, but to restore it. He took on human nature and rose from the dead. Through his incarnation Christ honored the whole human race. According to the flesh he is brother of all men. The whole re-creation and restoration of the world and of humanity are the fruit of Christ's work.<sup>8</sup>

There is, therefore, a cultural mandate for the Christian and for all men. In its widest meaning culture implies all human labor expended on nature. But nature has two aspects, the world of sensation outside of man, and man himself including body and soul. There is the circle of man's labors towards the production and distribution of material goods. There is also the circle in which man ponders the true, the good, and the beautiful and produces in these fields, thereby developing and civilizing himself.<sup>9</sup>

The Gospel and Christianity are not hostile to culture as such. The former reveals the highest spiritual good; it is the satisfactory answer to man's yearnings. The latter reflects the Gospel's light for the whole of life.

However, the Gospel brings its own measuring stick. It relates culture to religion and gives it a moral significance. It relates culture to the supreme revelation in Jesus Christ.

Christianity, the religion of redemption revealing a kingdom that is like yeast, stands for the good in the manifestations of culture. It has served and it serves civilization well in spite of the imperfections of its

<sup>7</sup>W. der O., p. 15.

<sup>8</sup>G. D. III, p. 510.

<sup>9</sup>W. der O., p. 214.



confessors. Man must really become God's son again before he can be in the genuine sense a cultural being.

Culture can be a blessing, and it can be a curse. Bavinck refers several times to the poet Da Costa's words about the invention of printing, that it can be "a giant's step to heaven or to hell," and maintains that the same is true of culture. Christianity is the best guarantee of its stepping heavenwards.

Christianity came and unlocked for us a thought-world sparkling with life and captivating with beauty. To art a new matter, to thinking a lasting object, to language an eternal content were given. . . . In Christianity the true reconciliation is found, not only of God and man, but of all the contradictions that are found in the pagan world. All that in thinking and discoursing, in action and delivery is ugly and disharmonious is in conflict with the essence of Christianity. But all that is true, good, lovely, and well-sounding in the realm of art and science, among us or our opponents, that is Christian. For the middle-point of Christianity is the Incarnation of the Word, and in that there is the reconciliation of God and man, of spirit and matter, of content and form, of ideal and actual, of soul and body, of thought and language, of word and gesture.<sup>10</sup>

Christian man, then, under God has a cultural calling in the world. That world, though created good, was not "finished." It was man's task to make it true and good. The coming of sin did not stop man's vocation. With the help that comes from God man must invade every realm for God's sake to carry out his purpose. In his personal life, in family, society, state, in science, and in art it is both his task and his glory to work at the pile of culture and to permeate it all with the radiance of Christ.

## II. SOURCES OF THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM.

Bavinck's position is that all knowledge of God, all religion, all culture depend on revelation. The self-disclosure of God manifests itself in a general and in a special revelation.

By the former we understand God's revelation in nature, history, and man. "This revelation to which faith answers is found in the widest sense in all the works of his hands, in all nature, in all history, in the totality of the universe."<sup>11</sup>

But this general revelation, though it belongs in varied measure to all people, is best understood in the light of special revelation. Man needs the latter because without it he cannot see well. Calvin speaks of Holy Scripture as a pair of spectacles. Subjectively man has need of the eye of faith to behold God also in his works.

From the beginning of time there was an original revelation with reference to the ideas of Deity as almighty and all-wise origin of all things, of the world established by wisdom, of the harmony of creation, of the

<sup>10</sup>*De Welsprekendheid*, pp. 78, 79.

<sup>11</sup>"Philosophie des Geloofs" in *Verzamelde Opstellen*, p. 15.



visible and invisible worlds, of the contrast between truth and error, the conflict between good and evil, of the immortality of the soul and the expectation of judgment.<sup>12</sup>

The revelation of Israel is joined to this original one, and it is the continuation, the development, and the completion of it.

General revelation, though insufficient, is important for all people and has great significance for the Christian understanding.

1. By means of it the Christian feels at home in the world. A person standing in the faith and in the light of special revelation finds in nature and in history traces of the same God who is his Father. The discovered ground is very rewarding. The Christian sees God in all and all in God.

2. General revelation gives a common ground on which to meet non-Christians. God speaks in creation, nature, and history, in the heart and conscience of all people.

3. Moreover, this revelation keeps nature and grace, creation and re-creation, the world of reality and the world of value together and makes the relationship possible. In that setting man comes to a knowledge of the Creator.

4. General revelation also arouses in man the sense of need for a special revelation.

5. Then again general revelation makes possible special revelation and prepares for it. The former has as purpose the keeping, the latter, the saving of the human race. Both glorify God.

Bavinck gives three reasons why general revelation is not complete and satisfactory. 1. It does not make known the person of Christ; it knows of no saving grace and forgiveness. It can illumine the conscience of man somewhat and check sin, but it can re-create neither the nature of man nor the world. 2. The knowledge it gives is unsure, mixed with error, and unreachable by many. 3. No single people have been satisfied with a so-called natural religion based on such a revelation. The abstractions of the eighteenth century and the historical sense of the nineteenth have left much to be desired. If thinkers have found a measure of satisfaction, the great mass of the people have not.

The basis of our faith and of the faith of those who have gone before rests on a revelation distinct from the general one. The two revelations differ in method and content. General revelation gives us some conception of God, of his goodness, righteousness, and anger, of his greatness and majesty. But nature presents no God of love. The Bible does that definitely.<sup>13</sup>

Special revelation is contained in Holy Scripture. The Bible is not the revelation but the record of it. In saying this Bavinck warns against those

<sup>12</sup>W. der O., p. 159.

<sup>13</sup>Modernisme en Orthodoxie, pp. 32-34.

who not only distinguish between the revelation and the record, but who separate them. He accepts organic inspiration and marshals all the data of the Old and New Testaments to prove both the inspiration and authority of Scripture. The uniqueness of the Bible lies in this, that it records the revelation of grace.

Behind this manifestation of grace lies the revelation that began with the human race.

The segregation and election of Israel served the sole purpose of maintaining unmixed and unadulterated, in a continuing and perfecting manner, the original revelation which threatened more and more to be lost, so that it might again in the fulness of time be made the property of the whole of mankind.<sup>14</sup>

The revelation recorded in Scripture and culminating in Christ does not ask our approval or disapproval, but it places itself far above us and urges us to faith and obedience. The objective revelation must complete itself in the subjective. That is why the Christian Church at all times made confession of the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti*. Bavinck maintains spiritedly that the doctrine of the testimony of the Holy Spirit is by no means the Achilles' heel of Protestantism. "It deserves rather to be called the corner stone of the Christian confession, the crown and seal of all Christian truth, the triumph of the Holy Spirit in the world, the foolishness of the Cross overcoming the wisdom of the world, the victory of the thoughts of God over the deliberations of man."<sup>15</sup>

For Bavinck general revelation has tremendous significance. It has more value than is often attributed to it. But it lacks completion and fulfillment. Its best meaning requires the illumination of special revelation. Both revelations complement each other.

### III. INSUFFICIENCY OF NATURAL THEOLOGY

Since Bavinck's day the problem of general and special revelation has issued in a vital and at times almost furious debate. In this article we cannot enter into the controversy between Barth and Brunner, nor can we present the views of such scholars as John Baillie, Oscar Cullmann, G. C. Berkouwer, Christopher Dawson, and Gustaf Aulen.<sup>16</sup>

For Bavinck scholasticism, rationalism, philosophical idealism, and naturalistic humanism in their emphases on natural theology stress reason before faith or at the expense of it. The revelation in these systems and the revelation upon which they prefer to feed have value but again under the illumination of the Word.

Wandering between two worlds, one dead  
The other powerless to be born

<sup>14</sup>W. der O., p. 162.

<sup>15</sup>G.D., I, pp. 646, 647.

<sup>16</sup>G. C. Berkouwer, *General Revelation*, Eerdmans, 1955, and John Baillie, *The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought* (Bampton Lectures), Columbia Univ. Press, 1956, are very helpful.

may well be the picture of natural theology that desires to prove how far it can go on its own power and in its own light.

Bavinck, like the Reformers, like Barth, Brunner, Baillie, and other Christian thinkers, cannot speak of natural theology apart from Christian revelation. If he had been invited to deliver the Gifford Lectures, he would have found it not only difficult, but also impossible to meet the requirements of Lord Gifford to treat the subject as a strictly natural science. He would have expressed thoughts akin to William Temple's closing sentences in *Nature, Man and God*:

Natural theology ends in a hunger for that Divine Revelation which it began by excluding from its purview. Rightly sifting with relentless criticism every argument, it knows what manner of Voice that must be which shall promise relief to mankind, but the Voice is not its own, nor can it judge the message that is spoken. "Come unto me. . . and I will give you rest;" it is not philosophy that can estimate the right of the Speaker to issue that invitation or to make that promise; that right can be proved or disproved only by the experiment of life (p. 520).

And for Bavinck that experiment would have been full of the experience that comes with God's initiative most fully in Christ.

As the heavens declare the glory of God only to the believer, so general revelation declares that glory only under the aspect of special revelation.

As a disclosure of the greatness of God's heart special revelation far surpasses general revelation, which makes known to us the power of his mind. General revelation leads to special, and special revelation points back to general. The one calls for the other and without it remains imperfect and unintelligible. Together they proclaim the manifold wisdom which God has displayed in creation and redemption.<sup>17</sup>

Without special revelation general revelation and all the manifestations of culture lose the best meaning God intends for them.

#### IV. RELATION OF REVELATION AND CULTURE

Culture is inseparable from revelation, for the latter implies meanings, God's meanings and intent as far as man can assimilate them.

God did not reject fallen man and the world. On the contrary, he upholds them by his mighty providence and is working out his plan of redemption for them. The fallen world in which we live rests on the foundations of a creation which was very good. Far from letting that fallen world go, God has his increasing purpose in it. In civilization and culture he is working out his plan. All the elements of culture exist only because God has laid down thoughts and powers in his creation, which man under his leading learns to understand. When man views all things *sub specie aeternitatis*, he gets hold of divine meanings.

Scripture itself will not hear of the despising of the body and of the created world. It evaluates them in the divine and human setting. It

<sup>17</sup> *W. der O.*, p. 23.

teaches that man in body and soul is the image-bearer of God and that by means of his body he is related to the visible world.

God purposes not only the restoration of man, but also of the cosmos. He desires to wrest the whole world in its organic consistency from the power of sin and to let the glory of God shine in all creatures. Grace did not destroy nature, but it has renewed and sanctified it. Jesus did not come to condemn the world but to restore it.

God's concern for man and the cosmos, for religion and culture is made known in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Revelation, while having its center in the person of Christ, in its periphery extends to the uttermost ends of creation. It does not stand isolated in nature and in history. . . . With the whole of nature, with the whole of history, with the whole of humanity, with family and society, with science and art it is intimately connected. . . . The foundations of creation and redemption are the same. The Logos who became flesh is the same by whom all things were made. The First-born of the dead is also the First-born of every creature. The Son, whom the Father made heir of all things, is the same by whom he also made the worlds.<sup>18</sup>

Without that revelation in Christ man, the cosmos, and the entire realm of culture have little or no meaning.

The wisdom of such a revelation must always be brought into relationship with the divine revelation that comes from the world. When that occurs, the whole realm of culture in all its varied manifestations takes on the meanings God intends.

That makes possible the Christian's appreciation of culture. He may cherish all that is good and grand in men and that has been brought about by men. He should guard against the despising of gifts and the deifying of man.

The Reformers, looking upon nature in the light of God, saw it not as a deceiving, satanic power, but as a revelation of divine glory, a wonderful work of unity and harmony. So also the Christian can look around him and within and enjoy all that is true, good, and beautiful. Assured of his being a child of God, he can freely look around and enjoy without restrictions all good and perfect gifts coming down from the Father of Lights. All is his because he is Christ's, and Christ is God's.

Faith for the Christian is not only the way of salvation, it is also the conquering of the world. The spiritual life does not shut out family and civic life, the social and political, the scientific and artistic. On the contrary, it is the power that enables the faithful carrying out of the earthly calling and stamps the whole of life as a serving of God.

The world under God offers both challenge and enjoyment.

Priest in God's temple, the believer is, therefore, king over the whole earth. . . . He loves the flowers that grow at his feet and marvels at the stars that

<sup>18</sup>W. der O., pp. 22, 23.

twinkle above him. He does not despise art which is a costly gift of God, and he does not rail at science which is God's gift. . . . He believes that every work of God is good, and that nothing is to be rejected but to be accepted with gratitude. . . . He is like a flower which unconsciously spreads its fragrance. In a word, he is a man of God equipped for all good work. And while his life is Christ dying will be gain.<sup>19</sup>

Such ecstatic words must be understood in their setting and from the point of view Bavinck is taking at the time. We find such statements in Calvin. We make them ourselves. They do not at all deny the reality of sin and evil, and the darker picture of man.

Bavinck is aware of the light and the darkness as Rembrandt was. That is why he maintains that apart from the full revelation in Christ culture has its limitations. As Brunner says, culture and civilization in themselves do not guarantee the truly human character of life. Man has longings which culture cannot fulfill. For all culture gives satisfaction but also creates and awakens needs. "That is why religion has always existed alongside of culture, or better still, religion preceded culture, and culture everywhere came into existence and developed under the influence of religion."<sup>20</sup>

Yet, the Christian must affirm, not deny, the culture-process which under God goes on. It is his mission to appreciate and to cultivate all that is best in creation and redemption. He can do that most tellingly when he considers it his mission to the world to give mankind the comfort of the Christian faith, that all the goods of earth come to man not by chance, but from the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who rules heaven and earth, and in whose light alone life with its prosperity and adversity is to be understood.

In spite of its limitations culture forms a very important part of the Kingdom of God. As a cultural being, active and receptive, the Christian enriches the Kingdom and takes part in the realization of its coming.

That enticing avenue we cannot enter because this article, like, time, must have a stop.

<sup>19</sup>*De Zekerheid des Geloofs*, p. 105.

<sup>20</sup>*G.D.*, III, p. 351.

## THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST FOR ESCHATOLOGY

GARRET A. WILTERDINK

In the first sermon of the Christian Church, Peter, in laying before his hearers the essence of the gospel message, concludes his description of Christ's life by saying that "God has made him both Lord and Christ." Small wonder that the earliest confession of the church became "Christ is Lord." This confession indicates neither a shallow understanding nor a lowest common denominator. Rather it shows the centrality of Christ's Lordship in the mind of the early Christian and the all-embracing nature of this concept. This being the case, we can do no better than to consider the implications of Christ's Lordship in the area of most vital concern in our day, that of eschatology.

Before we can spell out any eschatological conclusions we must fix clearly in our minds the biblical meaning of the Lordship of Christ.

The term "*kurios*" has as its basic meaning, "ruler" or "one having authority." Sometimes the word can mean "owner," as the master of a slave. It came in pagan Greek society to refer to deity as it was ascribed to kings and rulers.<sup>1</sup> However, the New Testament usage must be abstracted, by and large, from the pagan Greek context and seen rather in the context of the Old Testament veneration for the divine name.<sup>2</sup> For the weighty significance of the term "Lord" is to be seen primarily in that it is the Greek translation of the Old Testament tetragram, Jahweh. Christ's Lordship can be identified with his Kingship and indicates that Christ is the fully adequate representative of God.<sup>3</sup> John Calvin, commenting on I Corinthians 8:6, says the appellation, "Lord" implies that "all things that are God's are assuredly applicable to Christ."<sup>4</sup> The identification of Christ's Lordship with his Kingship may appear erroneous from one point of view, for the Kingship of Christ is usually conceived as only one of the three offices of his Messiahship while his Lordship seems to eclipse and swallow up all other offices, being identified with the essence of divinity. However, as Calvin indicates, the Messianic status of Christ had always a particular reference to his Kingship and in this sense Christ's Kingship or Lordship predominates from all points of view.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Alan Richardson, *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1952) p. 130.

<sup>2</sup>W. A. Visser't Hooft, *The Kingship of Christ* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948) p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup>John Calvin, *Commentaries* (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845) "Corinthians," Vol. I, p. 278.

<sup>5</sup>John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1949) Vol. I, p. 542.

In addition to the term "*kurios*," the Lordship of Christ is implied in such words as *kephale* (head) and *anakephalaiosis* (gathering up). The former, as used in Ephesians 1:22, implies the highest authority in the administration and accomplishment of all things.<sup>6</sup> The latter term is used in Ephesians 1:10 with reference to Christ and indicates that in Christ, God has restored all things to order and the original created unity.<sup>7</sup> Just as sin which disturbed the order is an active, positive negation of the creative purpose, so also the revelation of him who is to restore all things is a dynamic, continuing Lordship, a "heading up" of all things in Christ.

We turn now from the person of the Lord to the arena of his Lordship, the area of his kingly rule. The opening proclamation of the Messianic age was, "Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand." Jesus himself reveals the centrality of this concept in all his teaching and gives it also to his followers as the essence of their message. Volumes have been written on the meaning of this crucial concept and it has been variously defined and delimited. The use of the term in this paper is only as it contributes to an understanding of the meaning of Christ's Lordship. From this point of view we might define the Kingdom of God in simplest terms as the expression of God's sovereignty in human affairs. This does not mean the earthly kingdom of the Jewish expectation. The early evidence of Christ's "intensive universalism" reveals that he never expected it to be such.<sup>8</sup> In one sense the rule of Christ is an internal, hidden rule. Its fullest expression is in the heart of the believer. So it can be said, "Wherever Christ is Lord over man's heart, there the kingdom of God is . . . ."<sup>9</sup> With Christ begins the internal rule of God of which Jeremiah spoke, "I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts." Thus the immediate sphere of Christ's reign is the *ecclesia*, over which he reigns as mind over body.<sup>10</sup> However, Christ is also Lord of all creatures (Matthew 28:18), but this rule is yet a hidden rule, unasserted and unrecognized by the world. While "Christ rules over all things in heaven and on earth, the spacial center of this Lordship is the church, which constitutes his Body upon earth."<sup>11</sup>

All of this leads us to the apparent paradox of the kingdom's being a present reality and yet a future promise. These two elements in Christ's kingdom teaching should never be taken as contradictory. They are rather two aspects of one great truth such as the two foci of an ellipse. The difference between the kingdom which is and that which is to come is *not* in that one is brought about by natural and the other by supernatural forces,

<sup>6</sup>Calvin, *Commentaries*, "Ephesians," p. 217.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 204.

<sup>8</sup>Geerhardus Vos, *The Teaching of Jesus Concerning the Kingdom and the Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951) p. 42.

<sup>9</sup>Emil Brunner, *Eternal Hope* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1954) p. 68.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>11</sup>Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1952) p. 151.



but merely in the mode of operation and revelation of the supernatural force common to both.<sup>12</sup> The reason for the paradox does not lie in the necessity of a human contribution to the consummation of the kingdom but only in the eternal decree of God. When Christ says, "The kingdom of God *has come* upon you, he refers to the divine activity which operates in spite of human contribution or opposition.<sup>13</sup> So also Christ's statement to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world," should not be taken as a denial of the present reality of that kingdom. The meaning is rather, "My kingdom is not a mere earthly kingdom. It is not the sort of kingdom of which you, Pilate, are a part. My rule is not from the outside in upon men's lives but from the inside, from the hearts of men out into their lives." When one places this statement alongside such claims as "The Kingdom of God is in the midst of you," he can more clearly perceive the present reality of that kingdom.

The arena of Christ's Lordship then is the Kingdom of God. In reality this includes all authority in the whole universe but at present it is a hidden rule in the hearts of believers.

Before we leave our consideration of the biblical meaning of the Lordship of Christ, we must fix our attention on one other aspect of Lordship which bears an especially vital relationship to eschatology. I refer to the *nature* of Christ's rule. The somewhat overworked expression of our day, "personal Lord and Savior" carries a great and profound truth. The early Church's confession of Christ as Lord never referred to a potential power standing over them as destiny or fate.<sup>14</sup> It was always conceived as a real and personal Lordship, known and experienced. The fulfillment of the law by Christ means one thing: nothing stands between God and his people. The basis of the Kingdom of God lies now in a personal relationship, a relationship of love. Yes, the Kingdom of God is the expression of his sovereignty in human affairs but that sovereignty is truly remarkable in character. As Brunner says, "He communicates Himself to us, as though He had need of us; He runs after us as though He could not do without us," like the king who wrapped himself in the clothing of a beggar and implored the beggars to befriend him. Not only does God wish to be personal himself but he also desires to make us truly personal like himself.<sup>15</sup> All of which points toward a great truth of God's Word which I would like to denominate "the desire for relationship." Geerhardus Vos defines the essence of the Kingdom as the supremacy of God in the sphere of saving power, the sphere of righteousness, and the state of blessedness.<sup>16</sup> The importance of God's "desire for relationship" is immediately

<sup>12</sup>Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>13</sup>Calvin, *Commentaries*, "Synoptics," Vol. I, p. 71.

<sup>14</sup>Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline* (London: SCM Press, 1949) p. 90.

<sup>15</sup>Emil Brunner, *The Mediator* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1947) p. 550.

<sup>16</sup>Vos, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-76.



seen in these three categories. For, apart from a personal relationship with God through Christ, these benefits of the Kingdom are meaningless and can have no existence.

Christ is the ultimate expression of God's "desire for relationship." This fact is reflected in the Greek word *krino* as applied to Christ. The basic meaning of the term is not that of negative judgment or condemnation. Rather it means "to separate" or "choose," that is, to give a decision positive or negative. Hence Christ is the judgment of all mankind. As Karl Barth says, "Christ is the sovereign decision made upon the existence of every man."<sup>17</sup> In him all men are separated into those who are "in Christ" and those who are "outside" of Christ. Relationship to Christ is the one determining category of human existence. The formula *en Christo* expresses a Christocentric theology of history. In Christ we enter into a new historical situation.<sup>18</sup> The Christian hope is based on the fact that the God-man Jesus has triumphed over sin, death and the powers of evil, representatively.<sup>19</sup> Those who are "in" him share in this victory. The very basis of Christ's Lordship lies in that he "stands for all."<sup>20</sup> For this reason the Church must at all times and in all things be in living contact with Christ. "The church exists only in permanent dialogue with its Lord." It must listen to him, answer him, be renewed by him and be judged by him.<sup>21</sup> So also the condemnation of the world is seen precisely in that it does not sustain this living relationship to the Lord of the universe. The nature of the Lordly rule of Christ is relationship. For every man a relationship is inevitable, for either we embrace him as our King or we face him as our Judge.

Having established something of a biblical notion of the meaning of Christ's Lordship, we shift our focal point to the specific eschatological implications of that Lordship. The fact that much of what we have already discussed has bordered on the area of eschatology reveals the truth of Brunner's statement, "Eschatology is not merely an appendix to Christian doctrine. Rather faith makes no affirmations but such as ever imply the Christian hope for the future."<sup>22</sup> As opposed to all other attempts to give meaning to human life, the Christian hope alone gives this meaning not only for the individual life but also for the history of humanity as a whole. It is a most personal meaning and at the same time the most universal meaning.<sup>23</sup> This broad application of Christian eschatology has not always been treated adequately. Men seemed to be in doubt about the answers to such questions as, Does the Christian faith have any cosmological refer-

<sup>17</sup>Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

<sup>18</sup>Visser't Hooft, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

<sup>19</sup>Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

<sup>20</sup>Barth, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>21</sup>Visser't Hooft, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>22</sup>Brunner, *Eternal Hope*, p. 28.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

ence? and, Just because Christ is the ultimate personal revelation of God, does this imply anything for world history? But we must clearly proclaim the truth that in Christ, the Creator-Savior of the universe, we find revealed the God who is not only the whence of our being but also its whither. And if this is true for us as individuals then it is also true for the world as a whole.<sup>24</sup> In Christ I see my history to be world history and world history my history.<sup>25</sup> In him we also learn the cosmical significance of human history. We see that the universe is nothing more than the vast stage of human history. The very fact that this cosmic God has broken into human history implies clearly the uniqueness and the value of human history. In this light we see the all-encompassing nature of Christian eschatology.

Turning from this broad consideration, we want to deal first with the dialectic implied in the very fact of Christ's Lordship. This dialectic, paradox, or tension, whatever one wishes to call it, is not a philosophic category superimposed upon the New Testament. Rather it is a part of the very atmosphere of New Testament thought. More than this, I hope to show that it is the necessary foundation of the New Testament revelation.

In that powerful chapter on the resurrection, I Corinthians 15, Paul presents clearly the dialectic implied in Christ's Lordship. In verse twenty-five he says, "For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet," and in verse twenty-eight, "When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him . . . ." We see that the fact of Christ's Lordship during this period means that we live in tension between the "already" and the "not yet." God *has* made Christ to be Lord, the victory necessary to his Lordship *has* been accomplished, yet he remains Lord only until all things are subjected to him, that is, only until he becomes Lord indeed. Therefore, as long as Christ remains Lord he will not truly be the Lord, and as soon as he becomes the Lord in reality he will give up his Lordship to God the Father. In the words of our creed we proclaim to the world that Christ has "ascended into heaven" and now sits "on the right hand of God the Father, Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead." Thus we announce to all, that the ascension and exaltation of Christ has initiated or rather corroborated his Lordship. Yet, just because it is established through ascension, removal to another realm, Christ's Lordship must now be ascertained by faith.

The whole New Testament reflects various aspects of this one great dialectic. In the parables of the wheat and tares and the draw net, Christ clearly teaches that in the area of his rule, the Kingdom, there is a present reality and a future consummation<sup>26</sup>—"already" but "not yet." The para-

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 186-187.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>26</sup>Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

bles and miracles of Jesus, indeed all of God's Word, are at the same time revelation and concealment—"already" but "not yet." I am at the same time righteous and a sinner—"already" but "not yet." I have died with Christ and risen with him to newness of life, I have been judged and found "in" him and yet my resurrection and final judgment lie in the future—"already" but "not yet." Colossians 2:15 speaks of the conquering by Christ of the powers of evil, as does Matthew 12:29. We often explain these passages by picturing Satan as conquered but chained and retaining some freedom but we ought never to think that we have thereby resolved the dialectical tension here implied. The question still comes back, if Christ has truly conquered Satan, if his cross is really the standard of victory, then why is the power of evil still so rampant in the world?—"already" but "not yet." I believe that the dialectic with which we are dealing is a part of or coterminous with the great dialectical tension between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. The Kingdom of God, as the expression of divine sovereignty in human affairs, has already come in Christ and yet awaits the consummation of the age to come. In like manner this age involves a tension in our lives between God's sovereignty expressed in Christ and our personal responsibility expressed in faith.

How can this dialectical tension be resolved? I believe that this question is ultimately unanswerable. I feel that this basic tension cannot be satisfactorily resolved. Furthermore, I propose that we cannot do without this tension. It is the gracious gift of God, given to keep our lives in *fruitful* tension between meekness and boldness, between praise and productivity, between humility and initiative. All of these virtues can become vices if the proper balance is not maintained. We must rest assured in the knowledge of the "already" but work with faith towards the "not yet."

More than this, I believe, as before stated, that this dialectic is essential to the New Testament revelation. In it we see the profound truth of the divine "desire for relationship." Calvin speaks of the ascension of Christ as the beginning of his reign and the opening of the way into the Kingdom of God, for Christ continually appears before God as our advocate and intercessor.<sup>27</sup> Here we see the reign of Christ as the expression of the divine desire for relationship. Christ ascends, leaves us, to allow room for such relationship and to insure that relationship by intercession. His ascension is in reality nothing more than the continuation and crystalization of the "Incognito" of his earthly life. This Incognito cannot be explained solely in terms of the awful, unapproachable majesty of God. To say that Christ was veiled so that men would be able to behold his face does not explain the fact that many men saw in him no divinity at all. No, the veiling of Christ is a part of God's plan of redemption motivated by the desire for relationship. Why did he not call upon the legions of angels in Gethsemane? Why does not God overwhelm men with his majesty and

<sup>27</sup>Calvin, *Institutes*, Vol. I, pp. 571-573.

power? Simply because that would defeat the whole purpose of the revelation of his Son. God desires to be our personal God and we his personal people. To overwhelm us with his power would obliterate our personalities and obviate the relationship which he desires. The divine desire for relationship is seen in the very idea of faith. Faith is never that which stands between persons. It is that which binds persons together. An overpowering demonstration of divine majesty would not allow for any possibility of response through faith and that very demonstration would constitute a barrier to relationship. As Barth declares, Christian faith must be regarded as absolutely man's decision, which is made in view of a divine decision.<sup>28</sup> Just because faith is that, God must withdraw his majesty so that the decision is possible. Then too the idea of faith necessitates the dialectic between the "already" and the "not yet" because its very nature implies an imperfect present and a future hope. For when that toward which faith points is realized then faith too must be done away. We conclude then that, if the essence of Christ's rule in men's hearts is found in relationship, a two-way personal encounter, the dialectic of the present age is the necessary concomitant of continuing redemptive history. If Christ's Lordship had been manifested in all its glory, the possibility of Lordship through relationship would have disappeared, the human component would have been inundated.

Our last major consideration is the *telos* of Christ's Lordship or what is sometimes called eschatology proper. This latter term is really a misnomer unless one defines the word "eschatology" solely in terms of time. If it is thought of, more properly I believe, as the ultimate issues of history, then the tension of which we have been speaking necessitates two terms such as "realized eschatology" and "consummate eschatology." We have taken the title of this section, "the *telos* of Christ's Lordship," from Paul's statement in I Corinthians 15:28, where he indicates the end and purpose of the Lordship of Christ. The *telos* of the Lordship of Christ is here seen to be also the *telos* of history and of the whole universe. Christ, as the revelation of the meaning of history, releases us from the antinomy of philosophical thought which is either cosmocentric or egocentric.<sup>29</sup> The Creator-Savior of the world relinquishes his Lordship to God when all things have been restored to their original place under the sovereignty of God. In the person of the Creator-Savior we see the original intent of creation and its ultimate goal. His creation must necessarily be in accord with his person and the revelation of himself in his saving act indicated that the goal of history is righteousness and fellowship with God. These two intents of creation, which in reality are one and the same, are also the basis and purpose of the consummate activity in resurrection and judgment.

<sup>28</sup>Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

<sup>29</sup>Brunner, *Eternal Hope*, p. 198.

As was mentioned above, the final resurrection and judgment are nothing more than the revelation of the separation which has in principle already been decided in Christ. In I Corinthians 15:12ff, Paul reveals the centrality of Christ's resurrection to the whole of Christian faith. In Christ's resurrection we see a fitting symbol and an overt manifestation of the truth that the redemption wrought in him includes the whole natural order.<sup>30</sup> Death is the visible aspect of sin. A redemption which does not remove death is by that fact an illusion. For this reason the full realization of our redemption *from* death must be coterminous with the end of history, since death is an integral part of human history.<sup>31</sup> In this light it can also be seen that the Christian's hope in resurrection is not a hope in life after death but in a life from which death has been removed.<sup>32</sup> "If a man is in Christ he is a new creature" but this new life is not outwardly visible. It is concealed under the husks of the old deathly existence—the being unto death. However, life for that man is no longer a journey unto death, but unto eternal life and death is only a transitional stage in the journey.<sup>33</sup> Thus it is that in Christ's resurrection the meaning of my own death is made known to me.<sup>34</sup> Being "in Christ" I can look forward to my own resurrection and my own going to be with the Father.

Turning to a consideration of the final judgment, we refer again to the basic meaning of *krino* or *krisis*. It does not mean only condemnation but rather separation. Christ clearly shows this in that great dissertation in Matthew 25:31ff. Since this separation involves salvation on the right hand and condemnation on the left, it is inevitable that the Savior of the world should also be its Judge. Again we would do well to note, that, although Christ speaks of a final judgment of a forensic nature, the true judgment of God on the world was accomplished in the incarnation, as John so vividly shows (e.g. 3:19; 9:39; 12:31). This was the *krisis* of human history. The final judgment is nothing more than the open revelation of every man's true relation to Christ and the eternal implications of that relationship. The meaning of judgment for those "outside" of Christ is that the *krisis* on their lives was a choice of separation from God. Eternity for such will confirm their chosen separation in hell. But for those who are "in Christ" it is a source of particular consolation to know that Christ will preside at the judgment.<sup>35</sup> This is like having my defense counsel also as my judge, he who pleads for me is the same as he who is to pass sentence. And since this counsel and judge is a personal friend of whose love I am certain, my hope in Christ can be a joyous expectation.

<sup>30</sup>Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

<sup>31</sup>Brunner, *The Mediator*, p. 568.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 570.

<sup>33</sup>Brunner, *Eternal Hope*, p. 111.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>35</sup>Calvin, *Institutes*, Vol. I, p. 575.

Before closing this paper, I would like to make a few concluding observations. The whole purpose of the Lordship of Christ is the glory of God. That means that the Church of Christ is not a means to an end but is an end in itself.<sup>30</sup> We who recognize the Lordship of Christ must also recognize and implement its purpose: the glory of our heavenly Father. This is connected with another implication of Christ's Lordship and that is our oneness. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." One Lord, one King means one Kingdom, one people. We must be willing to face this inescapable conclusion and to show forth the glory of God in our struggle toward that goal. The message of the church in our day must again center around the victory of Christ—the victory which made him our King and we his people. We must be ready to embody the implications of that victory for our individual lives and for the universe in the age to come, when the "kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever . . . King of kings and Lord of lords."

<sup>30</sup>Brunner, *The Mediator*, p. 588.

## OUR REFORMED CHURCH COLLEGES AND WORLD UNDERSTANDING

PRESTON J. STEGENGA

Never before in the history of mankind has there been a greater need for improved world and international understanding. Daily we learn through the newspapers, the radio, television, and other means of communication, concerning misunderstandings that are created between nations and areas of the world. Certainly one of the best means of combating these misunderstandings and creating improved world understanding is by the assistance of our institutions of higher learning.

A survey was recently published by the Institute of International Education concerning the increasing participation on the part of American Institutions of Higher Education for the promotion of improved international understanding.<sup>1</sup> The report, appropriately entitled, "Open Doors," discusses such topics as "Foreign Students in the United States;" "United States Students and Faculty Members Abroad;" and "Visiting Foreign Scholars on Faculties of the United States Educational Institutions." These foregoing topics reveal the tremendous increase of activity in international education at American Colleges and Universities.

One might well consider the role of our Reformed Church Colleges in this growing trend for greater world understanding through higher education. It, therefore, seems appropriate that we might outline some of the trends in our church colleges for improved world understanding. Certainly if our Reformed Church Colleges are not able to assist in this movement for improved world understanding, then our institutions are missing a tremendous opportunity for Christian Service.

### FOREIGN STUDENTS IN OUR COLLEGES

During the academic year 1955-56, there were 36,494 foreign college students in the United States.<sup>2</sup> These students came from 132 different nations and political areas of the world. Thirty per cent of the total number came from the Far East, twenty-three per cent from Latin America, fifteen per cent from Europe, fourteen per cent from North America, and thirteen per cent from the Near East.<sup>3</sup> Although a great number of these foreign students have attended the larger state universities, many of these students have matriculated in the smaller church colleges in our country.

In our three Reformed Church Colleges: Central College, Pella, Iowa; Hope College, Holland, Michigan; and Northwestern College, Orange

<sup>1</sup>*Open Doors*, (New York: Institute of International Education, 1956), pp. 45.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid*, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid*.



City, Iowa; there has been an increasing trend for more students from abroad to attend as full-time students. For example, during this past academic year at Central College there were students from Canada, the Virgin Islands, and Japan.<sup>4</sup> At Hope College during the 1955-56 academic year there were students from Arabia, Canada, China, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaya, the Netherlands, Philippine Islands, Syria, and Thailand.<sup>5</sup> While at Northwestern College during the same period there were students from Canada, Korea, and the Netherlands.<sup>6</sup> For the current academic year 1956-57 an Arab student from Bahrain, The Persian Gulf, and a girl from Tokyo, Japan, will also be attending Northwestern.

Thus, in our Reformed Church Colleges within the past academic year there have been at least 17 different nations represented among the student bodies. With the excellent Christian instruction offered by the faculties of our Church Colleges, these foreign students inevitably will return to their home lands as "Ambassadors of Good Will" with deep Christian conviction and understanding. Certainly one cannot estimate the far-reaching impact for world understanding which just one foreign student, who attended one of our colleges, will have when he returns to his native land. Moreover, the cosmopolitan campus atmosphere created by these foreign students at Central, Hope, and Northwestern, aids in informing our American students about the viewpoints and way of life in other lands. We most assuredly can help to create improved Christian world understanding with these students on our campuses.

#### FACULTY MEMBERS ABROAD

Another phase of the Institute on National Education's Survey discusses the matter of "United States Faculty Members Abroad." During the 1955-56 academic year it was reported that there were 1,275 faculty members of American Universities and Colleges overseas.<sup>7</sup> These professors were abroad on teaching or research assignments. More than half of them were in Europe, with smaller numbers in the Far East, the Near East, Latin America, and in Africa.<sup>8</sup>

According to the same survey, two staff members of our Reformed Church Colleges were on leave of absence to spend the academic year abroad. Dr. John W. Hollenbach, Dean and Professor of English at Hope College, has been in Cairo, Egypt, serving at the American University.

<sup>4</sup>*Central College Bulletin* 1956-58, (Pella, Iowa: Central College, 1956), pp. 109-112.

<sup>5</sup>*Hope College Bulletin*, 1956-1957, (Holland, Michigan: Hope College, 1956), p. 170.

<sup>6</sup>*Northwestern College Catalog*, 1956-1957, (Orange City, Iowa: Northwestern College, 1956), p. 57.

<sup>7</sup>*Open Doors*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

Miss Clara Van Til, Dean of Women and social science instructor at Northwestern College, has spent the past year on a Fulbright Scholarship studying and teaching in the Netherlands. When such faculty members return to one of our church colleges, having spent a year or more at a foreign institution, they inevitably will have much first-hand information to share with the students and their fellow faculty members. This type of contact is another direct means of creating better world understanding at our Reformed Church Colleges.

We, at our church colleges, certainly must and should continue to encourage our teachers to engage in these foreign teaching and travel opportunities. In the Fulbright Act there is provision for American College Professors to teach in approximately 30 different foreign countries.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, there are various Exchange Programs whereby foreign professors might also come to this country to teach in our institutions. These Exchange Programs for our teachers afford great opportunity for broad Christian Service.

#### STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

One of the best learning devices for our college students is through participation in various campus activities. These campus activities provide practical learning situations that often are not possible in the classroom. Students attending our colleges are becoming more active in actual promotion of international affairs. At our three colleges, Central, Hope, and Northwestern, there are active student International Relations Clubs. Typical of the program and objectives of these organizations in our church colleges is the statement in Central College's most recent *Bulletin* which indicates that:

The International Relations Club is a group of interested students organized for the study of contemporary international affairs and of general international work. This group is affiliated with the Association of International Relations clubs.<sup>10</sup>

A very effective student activity to promote better international understanding was initiated by Northwestern College's International Relations Club in the spring of 1956. This student organization in cooperation with the entire student body and faculty sponsored a Model United Nations General Assembly on the campus. Ambassador Carl Schurmann, Chief Delegate to the United States from the Netherlands, was the main speaker for the occasion. The general theme was "Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy." Every student at Northwestern was assigned to a United Nations delegation, appearing in the native costume of their nation, and joined

<sup>9</sup>Exchange Teaching Opportunities Under the International Educational Exchange Program, (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1956), p. 1.

<sup>10</sup>Central College Bulletin, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

the debate on the main topic, reflecting various national viewpoints. Various colleges and universities of the area also sent foreign students to attend the event and join their native national delegation. Moreover, the program was broadcast by radio and also televised, so that the general public was informed concerning a greater world understanding.

During the past year at Hope College, the International Relations Club celebrated its 10th anniversary. The Hope student organization sponsored numerous programs on international events concerning such discussions as: "The New India;" "Opportunities to Live International Relations;" "Israel, Egypt, and the Middle East"; and "The Future of International Law."

These various student activities, encouraged at our church colleges, afford a very excellent opportunity to learn more about world affairs by actual participation. Having experienced these worthwhile campus activities, our college graduates will go forth into their chosen professions as well informed "world-wide citizens."

#### CURRICULUM AND WORLD UNDERSTANDING

Certainly one of the chief objectives of any college or university should be to provide for the best and most worthwhile educational curriculum. For undergraduate training in recent years there has been a trend at American institutions of higher learning to offer broader general education courses, including the area of international relations.

At Central College such courses as International Politics, International Organization, and International Law are offered in the Political Science Department.<sup>11</sup> At Hope College similar courses are offered, as well as a course in Foreign Policy, and in Current Problems of Public Policy.<sup>12</sup> Northwestern College also has courses dealing with international affairs and world understanding, such as Great Problems of European Civilization and Comparative Governments.<sup>13</sup> These varied political science courses aim to give the student a broad understanding of world affairs. For example, the course in International Politics at Central College includes:

An examination of the nature of the Nation-State System, of facts affecting International Relations, of the sources of conflicts in the International Community, and of the possibilities of solution by power politics and international cooperation.<sup>14</sup>

A recent program incorporated into the Hope College curriculum provides for summer school abroad. College credit is given for participation

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>12</sup>*Hope College Bulletin*, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

<sup>13</sup>*Northwestern College Catalog*, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>14</sup>*Central College Bulletin*, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

in study tours to Europe and Mexico. The recent *Hope College Catalog* states that:

These tours are conducted by qualified members of the faculty with nominal expense to the student during the summer months. Enrollment is limited to those who have completed two years in a modern language spoken in the area visited. Thus, Hope students are not limited to a classroom acquaintance with a foreign language, but also have an opportunity to practice it in the country where it is spoken, as well as enrich their knowledge of foreign culture through direct contact. The college will also consider granting college credit for other foreign study tours organized under college or university direction.<sup>15</sup>

Certainly such courses as taught by Christian scholars in our Reformed Church Colleges will aid our young people to have a better understanding of the world in which we live. Moreover, a future foreign missionary would most assuredly be better prepared to meet the problems that will face him abroad, if he has had some academic training in our colleges concerning foreign affairs.

#### OPEN DOORS AND NEW HORIZONS

Our church colleges are implementing more varied means for creating better understanding of world affairs. Hope College has established the Hawkinson Memorial Lecture, designed to bring outstanding speakers on International Relations to Hope College and the community.<sup>16</sup> In 1954 the first speaker was the Honorable Trygve Lie, First Secretary General of the United Nations.

Another new technique to create a better understanding of international affairs has been introduced at Northwestern at the suggestion of one of our Reformed Church Missionaries in Arabia, Rev. Edwin Luidens. At his suggestion, subscriptions to various American language newspapers published in various parts of the world are sent weekly to the college library. Included in these subscriptions that arrive at Northwestern are such newspapers as "The Iraq Times" of Baghdad, Iraq; "The Daily Star" of Beirut, Lebanon; and "The Weekly Mail" of Madras, India. Other possible subscriptions are from Johannesburg, South Africa; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Manila, The Philippines; Tokyo, Japan; and Sydney, Australia. These newspapers reflect the nationalistic viewpoints and cultures of different countries concerning international issues. This affords various classes in history and social science the opportunity to read the different newspapers concerning the same event, and thus, absorb the varied nationalistic viewpoints on a certain issue from different parts of the world. Through these newspapers, a real opportunity is provided for discussion about the Western, Eastern, and Neutral international views concerning newsworthy events. Although this project is in an early stage, it has been proven to

<sup>15</sup>*Hope College Bulletin*, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 16.

be a very practical way for the students to learn about nationalistic views of other nations.

#### OUR GRADUATES ABROAD AND AT HOME

When one considers these various methods that are being developed at our Reformed Church Colleges for the improvement of world understanding, one realizes that our graduates from Central, Hope, and Northwestern will undoubtedly have a broader international understanding. Whether our college graduates stay at home or go abroad, this broader understanding is extremely important in the world today. If they stay at home, no matter what the occupation, it is important that they have a realization of the cultures and views of other parts of the world.

Formerly we thought only in terms of missionaries going abroad. However, in greater numbers our college graduates assume responsibilities throughout the world in many other fields of endeavor. It is vitally important that we have Christian diplomats who have been trained in our church colleges or Christian businessmen who might work in the oil fields of the Near East.

Certainly our Reformed Church Colleges must continue to develop these varied techniques to create improved world understanding while our students are still in college. Our students, whether from abroad or from home, our faculties, our curriculum, our campus activities, and all other phases of our church college programs, must continue to emphasize improved world understanding. The biblical quotation of "Go Ye Into all the World and Preach the Gospel" will then have even greater meaning as our students become "Christian Ambassadors of Good Will." Our colleges, Central, Hope, and Northwestern, will then have a continuing and important role in the promotion of World Peace through Christian Service.

## CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Students, faculty members, and friends gathered from far and near as the new academic school year was officially opened by the series of Convocation lectures September 12 and 13. The Convocation speaker was Dr. Frederick H. Olert, '29, pastor of the historic Second Presbyterian Church of Richmond, Va. In his first address Dr. Olert invited us to look at "The Act of Self-Dedication." Following that he spoke on the pertinent subject "What Time is It?" Thursday morning the formal Convocation was held with Dr. George Mennenga, Dean of the Seminary presiding. Dr. Olert challenged us with his inspiring message on the Cross of Christ, "That Strange Symbol." His messages will not be quickly forgotten by those who heard them. Friday morning, September 14, regular classes were begun and the 72nd school year was on its way.

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We rejoice with the members of the graduating class of 1956 in their work which has just begun in the fields of service to which God has called them. Following are their names and the fields where they are beginning their ministry: Russell Block at Peapack, New Jersey; Robert Conner at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia doing graduate work; David Hager at the University of Chicago doing graduate study; Mark Hesselink at New Baltimore, New York; Wil-

liam Hoffman at Carmel, Iowa; Roy Kats at Dell Rapids, South Dakota; Louis Kraay at Trinity Church, Inkster, Michigan; Neal Mol at Grace Church, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin; Sylvester Moths at Ferry Memorial Church, Montague, Michigan; George Muyskens at Meredith Drive Church, Des Moines, Iowa; Joseph Muyskens at Haven Church, Parchment, Michigan; William Nelson at Casnovia, Michigan; Stuart Noordyk at Grant, Michigan; Robert Ondra at Palmyra, New York; Robert Otto at Hopkins, Michigan; Burrell Penning at Keystone Church, Indianapolis, Ind.; Carl Schroeder—Missionary to Formosa; Robert Spencer at North Church, Watervliet, New York; Carl Van Farowe at Wyandotte, Michigan; Douglas van Gessel at Atwood, Michigan; Ed Viening at Dunningville, Michigan; Collins Weeber at Eastmont Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Arvin Wester at Luverne, Minnesota.

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The members of the senior and middler classes have returned to Western from very profitable experiences in their summer fields of service.

The members of the senior class and their fields are as follows: Levi Akker at Newhall, Grand Rapids; Henry Alexander from Ganges, Michigan; Robert Bender at Clinton, Iowa; Jack Boerigter at Portage, Michigan; Gary Boogerd at

Hamlin Church, Castlewood, South Dakota; Richard Bouwkamp at Dell Rapids, South Dakota; Julius Brandt at Immanuel Church, Chicago; James Brinkhuis at Waterloo and Parkersburg, Iowa; John Busman at Millwood Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan; David Cornell, pulpit supply; Eugene De Hoogh at Pella Classis; Paul De Vries, returned from the armed forces; Ray De Vries at Hastings, Michigan; Robert Dykstra at Grace Church, Detroit; Dick Evers at Garden Grove, California; Robert Garrett from Hillman, Michigan; Rod Jackson, pulpit supply in Holland area; Don Jansma at Chicago Classis; Charles Johnson at Mescalero, New Mexico; Wesley Kiel at Rose Park Church, Holland; Earl Laman at Strasburg, North Dakota; Ed Martin at Riverside Church, Cleveland; Jim Meeuwssen at Bethany Church, Kalamazoo; Norman Menning at Antelope Valley Church, Marietta, South Dakota; Harold Opperman at Willow Lake, South Dakota; Richard Pruiksma at Barnard Church, Charlevoix, Michigan; Thurman Rynbrandt, Boy Scout Chaplain at the Gerber Scout Reservation; Paul Shih at Keene, New Hampshire, Camp Chaplain; Robert Smith at Castro Valley, California; Ray Teusink at Dempster, South Dakota; Tom Thomasma at Annville, Kentucky; Charles Vander Beek at First Church, Lansing, Illinois; Cornelius Vander Heyden at Gibson, Michigan (6 weeks); Jim Van Hoeven at Army Chaplains School in New Jersey; Larry Veenstra at Hope Church, South

Haven, Michigan; Ken Vermeer in Southern California; Gilbert Visser at Conklin, Michigan; Nevin Webster at Garden Homes Church, Denver, Colorado; Robert Zap at Gibson, Michigan (6 weeks).

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The members of the middler class and their fields of service are as follows: Gary Aitken at Y.-M.C.A. Camp, Grand Rapids; Lloyd Arnoldink at First Church, Grand Haven, Michigan; Louis Benes at Bethany Church, Grand Rapids; Leonard DeBeer, pulpit supply, Classis of Wisconsin; Arthur DeHoogh, pulpit supply in Holland area; John DeJong, pulpit supply in California; William Estell at Camp Ottawa, Boy Scout Chaplain; Gerald Heemstra at Cypress, California; John Hoekstra at Matsqui, British Columbia; Sam Hofman, pulpit supply in Classis of Cascades; Kermit Hogenboom, Chicago Classis; David Hondorp at East Harlem Protestant Parish, New York; Richard Huls at Evansdale Church, Waterloo, Iowa; Irvin Jungling at Annville, Kentucky; Charles Kamp at Leonard Heights Church, Grand Rapids; Tom Keizer, pulpit supply, Presbytery of Michigan; Corstian Klein at Cooksville, Ontario, Canada; Edward Korthals at Cypress, California; David Mack, pulpit supply in Kalamazoo area; John Moerman at Exeter, Ontario, Canada; Peter Mondeel at Ripon, California; Robert Nykamp at Homewood, Illinois; Wayne Olson, pulpit supply in Holland area; Gerald Osland at



Grace Church, Grand Rapids; Ralph Pronk, pulpit supply, Classis of Pleasant Prairie; Fenton Strickland, pulpit supply, Rochester Classis; Albert Studley, pulpit supply, Classis of Hudson; E. Don Teusink, pulpit supply, Holland area; Howard Vander Guchte, pulpit supply, Classis of Wisconsin; Gerald Vander Velde at Oakdale Park Church, Grand Rapids; Richard Vander Voet at Barrie, Ontario, Canada; Sidney Van Gelder at Grace Church, Lansing, Illinois; Jan Van Oostveen at Red Cliff, Alberta, Canada; Harris Ver Kaik, pulpit supply, Southern California; Leonard Weesies at Moddersville, Michigan; Patrick Vostello at Wyandotte, Michigan.

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The new men in the junior class are as follows: Don Barnes, Long Island, New York; William Brouwer, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Arie Brouwer, Edgerton, Minnesota; Ronald Brown, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Warren Buitendorp, North Tarrytown, New York; Grover J. Davis, Zeeland, Michigan; Donald De Braal, Rochester, New York; Don Den Hartog, Hospers, Iowa; Arthur De Jong, Leighton, Iowa; John De Witt, Chicago; Lawrence Doorn, Grand Rapids; Leroy Dyk, Strasburg, North Dakota; Walter Henrichsen, San Lorenzo, California; Vernon Hoffman, Danforth, Illinois; Gordon Laman, Muskegon, Michigan; J. David Muyskens, Chandler, Minnesota; Harlan Nyhof, Inwood, Iowa; Bertrand Roskamp, Stout, Iowa; Norman Schou-

ten, Brandon, Wisconsin; Henry Stegenga, Chicago; Wayne Tidd, Nunica, Michigan; Elmer Vander Ploeg, Holland, Michigan; Nicholas Vander Weide, Paterson, New Jersey; Lyle Vander Werff, Stickney, South Dakota; Wilmer Ver Meer, Rock Rapids, Iowa; Robert Watt, Lyons, Michigan; Gordon Webster, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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On our campus this term are three special students: Paul Amstutz, New Haven, Michigan; Donald Cozadd, Hopkins, Michigan, and John Simpson, Midland, Michigan. Mr. Cozadd and Mr. Simpson have been with us previously.

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The Seminary greatly appreciates having students from abroad. This year we have three from the Orient. Mr. Paul Shih from the Chinese Church in the Philippines is beginning his third year with us. Beginning their first year are Mr. Ki Bum Han, Hope College graduate, from the Presbyterian Church at Pusan, Korea, and Mr. Paul Hayashi, graduate of Meiji Gakuin University, from the Church of Christ in Japan. We are happy to welcome these students into our fellowship.

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We welcome to the Seminary this fall Dr. Henry Bast who will teach in the Department of Pastoral Theology and Christian Education, which was formerly occupied by the late Dr. William Goulloze. Dr. Bast is well known in

Reformed circles as the Radio Minister for *Temple Time* and his experience as both pastor and teacher will be greatly appreciated as he begins and continues his work here at Western. We wish him God's richest blessing as he assumes his new responsibility.

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Friday evening, September 21st, the annual Faculty Fall Reception was held in the Commons Room. Students and their invited guests gathered to enjoy a time of fellowship and inspiration. Dr. Eugene Osterhaven was chairman and presided as master of ceremonies. The speaker of the evening was Mr. Lambert Ekster of Grand Haven, Michigan who recently returned from Africa where he served as a short-term lay missionary. His experiences in the mission as a builder and as a Christian witness were appreciated by all who attended. Special music for the occasion was provided by Mr. Neal Petty, student at Hope College. To conclude the evening a lunch was served by the ladies of the Third Reformed Church.

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An event to which we are looking forward with anticipation is the coming of Dr. Markus Barth to our campus December 6-7. Dr. Barth, son of the famous Dr. Karl Barth and a biblical scholar in his own right, is Professor of New Testa-

ment on the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago. The general subject of his lectures will be, "The Christological Significance of the Prologue of St. John's Gospel." He plans to speak twice on December 6 on "God Speaks for Himself" and "He Who Bears the Brunt." His lectures will end December 7 on the topic "A New Man Is Born."

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At its meeting in Holland last June, the General Synod chose Dr. George H. Mennenga, Dean of the Seminary, to be its President for the coming year. Dr. Mennenga has served the Church faithfully in the positions he has held in the past and is deserving of the honor and recognition which this high office bears. We join with all his friends in offering him our sincere congratulations.

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Sylvio Scorza, '52, completed his graduate work at Princeton Theological Seminary and on June 5 he received the Doctor of Theology (Th.D.) degree. His studies were largely done in the Old Testament department. The subject of his dissertation was *An Analytical Concordance of the Published Non-Biblical Documents from Qumran Cave One*. This fall Dr. Scorza is an instructor in the Evangelical and Reformed Seminary at Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Minor Prophets, Bible Commentary*, by Theo. Laetsch, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956. Pp. XIV-566. \$5.00.

The publishers of this commentary inform us that plans for a new commentary of the Bible is being projected to be written by scholars of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. This commentary is the second to be published, the first apparently being a commentary on Jeremiah by the same author. Certainly one interested in biblical studies cannot but be pleased with the prospect of having present-day scholarly labors coming out of the Lutheran tradition.

The author has been active in the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, throughout his life time. Twenty years were spent as a member of the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, where he lectured in the areas of Practical and Exegetical Theology. Since his retirement he has published the two commentaries mentioned above. One consequently expects to find a scholarly conservative commentary with a Lutheran cast. And—thus it is.

The plan of the author follows the usual procedure of giving a short introduction to each book, a translation—the author's—grammatical notes and commentary. The translation results from the author's study of the Massoretic Text and a forthright attempt to make it meaningful which in some cases becomes very difficult. The critical notes show heavy reliance on Gesenius-Kautsch's *Hebrew Grammar* (G.-K.)—a well-recognized grammar—and on Gesenius-Buhl's *Hebraisches und Aramaisches Handwörterbuch über das alte Testament* (G.-B.) Although Buhl's lexicon is of the best, yet one wonders, why the author passes by the lexicons of Siegfried-Stade, of Brown-Driver-Briggs, or of Kohler-Baumgartner recently published.

The author depends largely on Bar-

ton's *Archaeology and the Bible* for historical background. This unfortunately keeps him from the progress made in archaeology during the last three decades. Use of the *Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible* (1945)—as is done later—would have corrected dates, e.g. for Hammurabi 2104-2064 B.C. (p. 5) would be reduced some 300 years (*Atlas*, pp. 13a, 24b). The author apparently uses Ussher's chronology (p. 9) which no longer is tenable in the light of present day knowledge. Consequently one ought to take into account Albright's fixing of dates according to lists of Assyrian kings (*Atlas*, pp. 12, 13, 15). This would reduce the date of David's accession from 1056 B.C. (p. 1) to 1004 B.C.

The author frequently uses Luther's comments which are an asset to his work. Since the author has ready access to German works one would appreciate more use of modern German Lutheran works. The commentary combines exegetical insights with applications to life. The evils of communism, atheism and modernism—sometimes unionism!—are the chief counterparts of the sins of the times of the prophets. One fears that this gives the present day church an easy conscience over against her involvement in social and economic problems. The commentary is predominantly biblical in that many references are made to relevant words or passages throughout the Scripture. Furthermore, the author orient's his comments toward the New Testament in finding the proper fulfillment of the prophets in Christ and the New Testament Church. His method is a proper safeguard against arbitrarily reading the New Testament back into the Old.

I shall sample a small section of the author's work in translating one of the difficult passages of the Minor Prophets. The passage is Hosea 11:1-9 (pp. 86f). Here as throughout the commentary the author gives his own translation followed by some critical notes. Let it be

said at the outset that the making of a meaningful translation at all points in this passage has been the despair of several scholars. Therefore one cannot expect to find a solution to problems of text and translation with a text as difficult as this one.

V. 2. "They called to them, and in like measure they walked away from My presence." The LXX, which the author here rejects, has, "As I called them . . .", but he retains the LXX in "they walked away from My presence" (Heb. "their presence"). In the latter case he does not acknowledge his dependence on the LXX reading. In this verse it would seem advisable to accept the LXX throughout as does the RSV.

V. 3. "And I Myself taught Ephraim to walk, taking them up in My arms." "Taking them" is given for the meaningless *qbm* which Dr. Laetsch reads as *lqbm* by appealing to G.K. 19i, but he fails to note that G.K. 66g offers as the amended reading *w'qqbm*, "And I took them." Further "in My arms" he fails to acknowledge as coming from the LXX. Hebrew has "on his arms" which is meaningless.

V. 4. The 's of the Hebrew text is difficult. Dr. Laetsch sets aside "I inclined Myself to him" for the adverbial rendering "gently," which is a possible meaning for the word, yet it hardly fits the figure of feeding cattle, "gently gave food to them." Most translators prefer the first translation.

V. 5. "He shall not return to the land of Egypt." This is an accurate translation of the Hebrew text. Yet since this stands in contradiction to 8:13; 9:3-6; 11:11, it seems advisable to follow the LXX's suggestion and render it, "He shall return to the land of Egypt" (cf. RSV, Smith-Goodspeed).

V. 6. "And put an end to his liars." One wonders how the translator arrived at "his liars" since his critical note concludes that the Hebrew *br* means "crossbeams, bars to secure the city gates."

V. 7. "My people are impaled upon their apostasy from Me" has more merit

than the KJ's ". . . are bent to backsliding from me." The root *tl'* has the meaning of hanging or impaling as on a tree. The KJ's "bent" is a mere guess.

V. 9. "I will not come in fury" makes the phrase *b'ir* far more meaningful than the KJ's "in the city." However, "in fury" is a very uncommon translation for the Hebrew phrase.

From this and from other places in his work it is evident that the author makes an honest effort to translate the MT. Yet the MT is defective or corrupt in some instances. This he seems loathe to admit. In some cases the LXX offers a better reading which may well be used to make the translation meaningful as e.g. in the RSV. Dr. Laetsch makes some interesting comments and renderings; he is not bound to any one translation, yet one should check his work against competent scholars and lexicons.

One wonders why so little use is made of the RSV. *The Complete Bible* by Smith-Goodspeed is given wider reference.

—LESTER J. KUYPER

*The Defense of the Faith*, by Cornelius Van Til, Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1955. Pp. vii-436. \$4.95.

Professor Van Til of Westminster Seminary attempts, in this book, to accomplish a twofold purpose: (1) "to set forth, in a broad outline, a method of defending Christianity which is consistent with the nature of Christianity" (p. vii); (2) to deal with objections which, in the past few years, have been made against his system of apologetics. Though he calls the first of these the primary purpose, there appears to be no question that the volume was called forth by the rather large volume of protest leveled against his apologetic system. Most of the criticism has come from scholars of the Christian Reformed Church, though only one of them, Dr. Cecil De Boer (now deceased), was on

the faculty of Calvin College and Seminary. Dr. Ridderbos of the Free University of Amsterdam was also a critic. A rather large body of polemical writing on the issues involved has arisen, some of it in monographs, and some in periodicals (mainly *The Calvin Forum*) since 1953, and we are still in mid-conflict. In a review of this kind it will not be possible, beyond some generalizations, to try to play referee among all the disputants. The charges brought against Dr. Van Til and his type of apologetics are so many and diverse, something like a book-length treatment would be required to measure fairly charge against counter-charge, and vice versa. Dr. Van Til has attempted to do this very thing, of course, but I am sure at least another volume will be needed, perhaps by an "impartial" judge, to tell us precisely how things stand.

After a careful reading of this book, coupled with a diligent perusal of most of the protest literature, this reviewer came to a number of conclusions about the controversy and its main participants. This was rather inescapable, and I set them down for what they may be worth to the reader, hoping that he will then go to the literature, if he has not already done so, read it carefully and form his own conclusions. We noted above that charges were brought against both Van Til and his system of apologetics, though the first usually in the name of the second. A number of the critics, notably Dr. Jesse De Boer, allowed themselves to be carried away from time to time with strong emotional feelings. A note of asperity was observable here and there, and this is unfortunate, for an objective, even charitable, discussion of the issues would have been productive of far more understanding and theological clarity. But even worse, the critics either failed to understand Dr. Van Til's point of view, or they misrepresented it. The first of these is, of course, always a possibility, but the second is inexcusable. When one of Van Til's sentences or paragraphs lends itself to two or three different interpretations, and the

critic unfailingly chooses the worst possible interpretation as Van Til's undoubted position, scholarship has been abandoned in favor of personal pique. The critic may defend himself with the assertion that Van Til's use of language renders this kind of procedure inevitable, and there can be no doubt that Van Til's terminology, as his peculiar use of metaphor, leaves much to be desired. But anyone who has read Van Til through the years should have no special difficulty working through this problem to a reasonable exegesis of what he is trying to say. It should be said that not all the critics are guilty at this point, but those who wrote most extensively surely are.

Another peculiarity of some of the critics was to "read between the lines," that is, to judge Van Til, not for what he said, but for what he must be understood to have said. Thus the De Boers are able to read Van Til as an absolute Idealist in metaphysics, and Daane reads him as an existential dialectician on common grace. Van Til is able to counter with propositional theological statements to show that he has been rather badly misrepresented. On the other hand, there is a kind of "poetic justice" in this treatment of Van Til, for his own manner of treating Barth and Brunner, in his book *The New Modernism*, was very much in this same vein. He was taken to task at that time by many critics for constantly making the dialectical theologians say what they were not at all saying. Unless Van Til has been thoroughly chastened by that experience, he appears a little too pious in *The Defense of the Faith* when he "calls foul" by pointing to the obvious dissimilarity between his simple theological propositions and the heresies with which he is being charged. Incidentally, it should be noted that *The Defense of the Faith* does not contain new material, but is a restatement or repetition, out of his previous syllabi and other writings, of the author's viewpoint. For that reason Van Til can say, "See, this is what I have been say-

ing all along." In the critics' desire to show that Van Til is endangering the traditional Reformed theology with a dubious apologetic, they seem rarely to be satisfied with dealing with precisely what he said. Or, as we noted above, some may not have understood what it was he was saying.

A fair question raised by the publication of this volume is whether Dr. Van Til adequately answers the objections raised by the critics. This reviewer feels that he sometimes does, as we have indicated above, but not always. As a matter of fact, in the "This is what I have plainly said in the past" procedure, already noted, he escapes the necessity of facing squarely the objection or the charge levelled against him. For example, he does not show exactly how the charge of absolute idealism is a misconstruction of his thought by indicating, point by point, how the critic had misconstrued his meaning. Rather, he develops the total view of idealist philosophy, sets out his simple propositional theology, then asks the reader to behold the obvious difference. This is fine in a way, but it does not explain why a number of people have been able to read him rather consistently as a Christian theologian employing a philosophical terminology more characteristic of pagan metaphysics than of Christian Theism. If a man has been apprehended by the police for drunkenness, he does not absolve himself from blame by explaining that his theoretical position regarding drink is that of the teetotaler. He must explain, rather, why the smell of whisky was on his breath, or why he couldn't walk a straight line. Van Til's treatment of Daane's criticism is especially reprehensible at this point. When Daane accused him of being an existential dialectician, Van Til countered by visiting Princeton Seminary Library, dug up Daane's doctoral thesis on Kierkegaard, and then refutes Daane by showing that the latter had a liking for Kierkegaard. So Daane may well be an existential dialectician, and Van Til therefore is not. Van Til has mean-

while failed to do more than brush off Daane's contentions that some of Van Til's language and theological constructs have a dialectical twist to them. In correctly pointing up this fact, Daane is certainly in the right, though this fact may not disturb Van Til's main position of theological directness. The charges, nevertheless, are never really answered, and by a kind of "genetic fallacy," a dubious victory is claimed by Van Til. He does assert from time to time that when he uses words or forms of expression characteristic of pagan thought, he employs them in the service of Christian theology, and therefore with Christian sense and meaning. He shows, for example, how his "Aristotelian God" is not really Aristotelian at all, though some of the terminology used to define that God has about it something of the traditional Aristotelian flavor. This may or may not be an acceptable procedure for a Christian theologian, but at least it is incumbent upon the theologian, when using such terminology, to explain in detail what he is about. Van Til has not always done this, assuming that his readers would note the obvious difference. Obviously they have not.

The question whether Van Til's apologetic system is the true Christian theism is the question, ultimately, whether it is truly biblical. Van Til has no doubt of this whatsoever, for he asserts his confidence of this again and again. It is, in fact, the only theistic system allowed and given by the Bible, and therefore it is the only true system. There is no question that this aspect of Van Til's approach is in large part responsible for many of the attacks made upon him and his thought. It seems so utterly prideful. Not only are all other Christian theologies and apologetic systems in basic error, and therefore sub-Christian, but even the giants of Reformed theology, like Hodge, Warfield, Kuiper, and Bavinck made notable departures from the only true method. It appears that, apart from the Bible itself, Calvin alone escapes criticism. Van Til holds that he

is merely reproducing the consistent system yielded by both Bible and Calvin.

In analyzing this contention it is well to note that Van Til's theology, this consistent Calvinism, is composed of two main elements. The first element is the theological and it is set out quite simply in Chapter I of *The Defense of the Faith*, pp. 23-39. In so few pages it can be given only in barest outline, but there is sufficient there to show that Van Til is in thorough accord with Calvin and the main line of Reformed theology. He is also, therefore, from a Reformed point of view, thoroughly biblical in this presentation. The second and much larger element in his thought is the philosophical, and it encompasses the remainder of this rather good sized volume. Van Til never pauses to argue whether or not the second of these elements is completely consistent with, and rightfully drawn from, the first. He assumes that fact without question, so much so that when his critics, who do not doubt the orthodoxy of his theology, levelled their criticisms against his philosophy, he first attempts to refute them by displaying his sound theological orthodoxy and saying, How can anyone be more biblical and Calvinistic than I am? But it is precisely the philosophical element in Van Til's apologetics which bothers his critics, and they would like to be shown just how *this* theology and *this* philosophy can be joined together into the only possible Christian theistic system. By the fact that he assumes their interdependence, never presents solid arguments for it, and claims it all comes right out of the Bible, he has committed a serious injustice against those who would learn from him. This much is certain: if Van Til's apologetics are going to be more widely accepted in Reformed circles, element two in his thought is going to have to be validated by something more than the simple contention that two is really quite the same thing as one, and that the orthodoxy of one establishes the orthodoxy of two.

The reviewer will attempt to set out a few observations concerning Van Til's

philosophical treatment of the Christian Faith, points at which he has reason to question primarily the biblical, but also the Calvinistic, character of his thought. Van Til's insistence upon a "system" of Christian theism ought to be contrasted with the Bible's and Calvin's lack of the same, that is, in terms of some absolute, all-explanatory principle. Both the Bible and Calvin are "systematic" to some extent, but in this sense of the term, "system" is in the interests of a regulative principle; it is not constitutive. Van Til drives back of and beyond Bible and Calvin for absolute "system," a comprehensive, logical, and rational structure which takes all created reality into its toils. Is this permissible? That is moot, but certainly if Van Til feels that such a "system" may be constructed, it is incumbent upon him to justify the deed. The Bible contains a great store of information about God and man and their interrelationships. It is the province of theology to study these data and to arrange them in meaningful ways for the edification of the Church. All that it is necessary to know for salvation and for creative Christian living is given us in the Book, and the theologian's task is a precarious one, for he must tell us what this is without at the same time corrupting and distorting the truth in his systematic arrangement of it. A cursory study of the history of theology will reveal quickly how many have stumbled at this stumblingstone. It is now widely recognized that Calvin himself was not nearly so much a man of logical and rational system as he was once assumed to be. He has sharp words to speak about speculative theologians, and with a few exceptions, as in his discussion of the doctrine of the Trinity, his thought and expression are remarkably existential and closely related to our empirical situation. Calvin's presentation of his material is systematic, of course, but this is something else again.

Actually, Van Til's relation to the Bible and to Calvin is based on something else than their obvious non-ab-



stract, existential character. It is based on the presuppositions upon which both Bible and Calvin operate. The Bible presupposes a "self-contained, ontological Trinity," a God who has a Plan, often called by Van Til "his counsel," and this Plan not only determined, before the creation of the world, all things that would ever come to pass in the created sphere, but "controls" them in their operation so that "Change" or undetermined possibility are once and for all ruled out. Generally speaking, this view of biblical presuppositions can be undergirded by some biblical passages, and certainly by statements from Calvin. As a matter of fact this is exactly the way Calvin and many of his disciples have found themselves reading the Bible, though usually with less abstract, and more religious, terms. Then, asserts Van Til, since God is completely self-consistent and rational, so must all created reality be so. There can not be ultimate irrationalism in the system, without making God so, and there can not be ultimate irrationalism in the created sphere, for the same reason. Man thinks correctly and truly when he thinks analogically, that is, when he "thinks God's thoughts after him." Since the unbeliever can not do this, for sin has cut him off, to some extent, from his divine origins, his thought, even when objectively correct, is only formally so. The believer, on the other hand, can think truly or correctly because he is related properly to his divine origins, and this is true of him even when he lacks the objective correctness an unbelieving scientist has. His thought is closer to the truth because basically he is living and thinking in the dimension of divine truth, an area closed to the unbeliever.

It will be noted how this imposing structure is reared entirely upon biblical and Calvinistic *presuppositions*, not specifically upon discussions of these matters in those two sources. As a matter of fact, this type of discussion would be completely foreign to both sources. Both employ religious terms and images

when dealing with the profound truth of the sovereignty of God, with the mystery of the divine election, etc., not the language of logical, rational and abstract conception. And it is just here that Van Til fails to convince. If he chooses to convert religious terms into functional terms, he may do this only if he is able to justify the deed. If he chooses to erect a presuppositional apologetics, he must explain to us why, since this is not given in the revelation itself, we may construct the edifice at all. Above all, since the "system" is derived from presuppositions, in what sense can it be claimed to be "biblical" at all, except in the same derived, and therefore, secondary sense? The dangers implicit in this kind of system-building become most evident when the system-builder pours meaning into a word in a manner which seems most arbitrary, and then develops from that meaning the most amazing consequences for his completely articulated system. We shall take as an example a word used by Dr. Van Til a great many times, the term "control." He speaks again and again of "the counsel of God, as controlling all things" (e.g. p. 63). The original Plan of God controls whatever comes to pass in the created sphere. Van Til does not define this term except by use, a use which establishes his meaning of the term as control which is absolute. Obviously there are many forms of control, from absolute predetermination to mere oversight, but Van Til means control in the former sense only. Even sin is included in this, not in the sense that a superintending watch is kept over sin and sinners, but that sin *had* to come into the world by the decree of God. Adam thus was required to sin. If there were any other way, Chance would be more ultimate in God's universe than God's control. And if that be allowed, ultimate irrationality becomes the rule rather than the ultimate rationality guaranteed by his control. Such a view is clearly impossible, as far as the biblical account of the matter is concerned. The very opposite appears to be, and is, the

truth of the biblical revelation. In the interests of rational metaphysics, one is asked to yield up the plain sense of Scripture. Even Calvin was far more cautious at this point, though he held to a double predestinarianism. When faced with ultimate antinomies in such matters, he bowed before the *unrevealed* divine mystery. Van Til resolves the mystery by means of abstract system, in which, ironically enough, there is much reference to a "concrete universal," but all this at the expense of empirical factuality, that which we actually see with our eyes and touch with our hands. Van Til claims that the empirical situation is "explained" by reference to the Plan, but when empirical fact appears to our senses to be saying something quite other than what the Plan is said to be saying, our minds become broken at the point of obvious disparity between Plan and fact. Of course, sin has seriously affected our minds, and we do not see as we ought to see; nevertheless, on Van Til's own theory we who are regenerated can see quite truly and know truly. But, as in the case of Adam, noted above, though our regenerate sense tells us that God hates sin and can in no wise be held responsible for it, and that God was deeply grieved when sin entered the world, the Plan or the "counsel of God" requires us to believe that Adam had no alternative but that of sinning. Otherwise ultimate Chance would be more basic than ultimate rationality or divine system. To say the least, this kind of "biblical faithfulness" leaves much to be desired. Insofar as Calvin can be held to have inspired such thinking, he must be adjudged to have been in error. But it was mainly supralapsarianistic disciples of Calvin who have pressed the basically religious observations of Calvin into the mold of a rigorous logic. How much better to bow with Calvin before the mystery! God's sovereignty does not have to take the form of absolute predestinarianism in order to be genuine sovereignty. "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all genera-

tions" (Ps. 33:11). Every Christian can stand by this in the confidence faith gives. Any apologetic which, instead of explaining the Word of God and proclaiming its message, converts the meaning of the message into a cold, abstract structure which outrages the unbeliever and tends to confuse the believer, must be repudiated. In the final analysis, the best defense the "whole counsel of God" has in this world is found in its proclamation to the world. Its center is the living Lord Jesus Christ who died for our sins and rose again for our justification. It is brought home to the human heart and mind, not by rational explanation and argument, but by the "convincing power of the Holy Spirit." And there's always the gentle reminder:

Our little systems have their day;

They have their day and cease to be:

They are but broken lights of Thee,

And Thou, O Lord, art more than  
they.

—ELTON M. EENIGENBURG

*What Is Christian Baptism?* by  
M. Eugene Osterhaven, Grand Rapids:  
Society for Reformed Publications,  
1956. Pp. 59. \$50.

This little work should prove to be a valuable ally to the hard pressed pastor who is compelled by a too wide spread ignorance to teach three generations at once the precious faith that God's covenant of grace still stands. It should prove of service in "selling" the Reformed faith to the people of Baptist persuasion who are entering our churches, as well as in reconvinced our own people who have been shaken by Baptist propaganda.

The present work follows upon one published by the Society in 1951 written by the same author under the title, *The Meaning of Baptism*. The earlier work had three sections. The first contained the Office for the Administration of Baptism, in both its abridged and unabridged forms. This section does not appear in the new publication. The second section on the meaning of baptism

has been completely rewritten, though, of course, the same ideas appear. The third section on the candidates for baptism appears to have been lifted bodily into the new work, but significant additions are made toward the end.

The purpose of the work is "to set forth briefly . . . a statement of the Biblical teaching, as held by the Reformed Churches, on the subject of baptism" (p. 1).

The first chapter is a much too short discussion of the antecedents of Christian baptism. It does, however, succeed in two pages to establish the important fact that baptism as such is not a novelty born with the Christian community.

Chapter two deals with the meaning of baptism. Here Dr. Osterhaven follows the liturgy which in its turn follows the plan of the Epistle to the Romans and the Heidelberg Catechism. Baptism points to sin, salvation, and service. God's salvation involves three separate facts: the covenant made by the Father, the washing by the Son in his blood, and the sanctifying work of the Spirit.

The third chapter deals with the mode of baptism and discusses clearly the various usages and meanings of *bapto* and *baptizo*. It includes a brief treatment of the historical practice of the Church in so far as it is known to us.

The fifth and last chapter is by far the longest. We judge it to be the most helpful part of the work. Here the author seeks to defend the practice of infant baptism under five well-reasoned propositions. Objections are briefly but carefully answered. The author does not answer the contemporary European objections to infant baptism but points out that these are really objections against a lack of church discipline. He stresses the responsibilities of parents and congregation if infant baptism is to be practiced.

With no intent to disparage the good work we would raise a few questions. On page 44 we read: "Our fifth and last proposition is that children are entitled to the ordinances of the cove-

nant." Both Old and New Covenants had two ordinances or sacraments. Under the Old Covenant male children, at least, received both. Why then, under the New, are children denied the privilege of the Lord's Table? The question is not raised in this work, but the sentence quoted above will certainly raise it in the minds of those who question infant baptism.

The author has done well to follow the liturgy in his discussion of the meaning of baptism. Baptism is certainly a sign and seal of the saving work of the Triune God. One cannot be wrong in stressing union with Christ as an aspect of that salvation (pp. 16f). The question is, how can baptism be at once a sign of an established fact and a probability. The fact is that the child is a member of the covenant in its outward aspects at least. The hope is that he is also washed in the blood and sanctified by the Spirit, or, indeed, will be. But this is by no means certain. While baptism is a sign of union with Christ and of the sanctification by the Spirit, the baptized infants continue to possess "a vicious nature which will destroy them if it is not changed" (p. 54). Is the Church simply guilty of a forgivable error in judgment when it baptizes one who subsequently repudiates his privileges, or does it have some right to baptize such persons? If the Church has such a right what are its grounds?

Limits of space and the practical purpose of the work may have made it unwise to face such questions. They, and others like them, will have to be faced before a truly definitive work can be written on baptism. We hope that the author will continue his study and give us such a larger work some day.

A minor fly in an otherwise precious ointment is a sentence on page 16 which is sacramentarian as it stands but is certainly not so intended. ". . . it (for which the antecedent seems to be baptism) is a participation in the passion and death and resurrection of the Savior." Baptism is not participation

in but a sign and seal of such participation.

—RAYMOND R. VAN HEUKELOM.

*The Prophets—Pioneers to Christianity*, by Walter G. Williams, Denver: Abingdon Press, 1956. Pp. 212. \$3.50.

All books are colored by the authors' point of view. Sometimes it is rather difficult to detect this particular point of view. This is not true of this book. The author tells us that he is interested in showing that the religion of Israel, especially as we find it in the eighth century before Christ, is rooted in an ethical monotheism, that is, the ever growing realization and recognition of one God who is not alone almighty, but also righteous and good. Men came to this knowledge through a struggle within their own personalities as they sought to know God. The author has little appreciation for any idea of revelation as generally understood in Reformed thinking. Man discovers God by logical thinking. In a comment on the words of Amos to Israel that since they claimed to have known the mind of God, they also carried a greater moral responsibility, he writes, "It was this same logical thinking that led Amos to his discovery of the moral nature of God, for he knew not only that none but a moral God had the right to demand moral conduct from people, but that only a moral God could create a moral universe." This point of view is of course not new, being very much in vogue around the turn of the century.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part seeks to introduce the reader to the Bible in its relation to archaeology and historical evaluation, with a special study on the place of the prophet in the Old Testament.

The second part of the book shows ancient man moving up in the scale of religion from a discovery of God in the broad sense to an understanding of what God was like. The result was that religion moved up from its primitive

magic to a religion of morality and worship. As man's conception of God grew he moved from a religion which was nationalistic to one which was personal. It was in this last period of growth that the eighth century prophets were instrumental in leading the people into a greater understanding of God and thus becoming pioneers to Christianity.

Part three deals with the prophets Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. The author gives a resume of the contents of each book, at the same time pointing out a particular concept which was stressed by the prophet. In Amos there is the teaching of moral responsibility, in Hosea unrequited love, in Isaiah the majesty of God, in Jeremiah prayer, and in Ezekiel the kingdom of God. These are the concepts which the author identifies with the teachings of Jesus, and in this way the prophets become pioneers to Christianity.

This reviewer found part three very stimulating. The author used his broad background in language, Old Testament history, and archaeology to make these books live. Especially excellent is his discussion of Hosea, the prophet of unrequited love. His discussion of prayer in the book of Jeremiah lifts prayer to the high level, "thy will be done." The author has difficulty with Ezekiel's insistence that the change of the individual will be due to the power of the Deity and not the choice of the individual. Obviously this difficulty is rooted in the author's theological point of view regarding the sovereignty of God.

In a final chapter he asks his readers to continue on the journey of the prophets, having been encouraged by the guidance of the prophets and the teachings of Jesus. The words of Shirley Jackson Case might well have been used to close the book. They call to a continuance of the journey as well as putting in a few sentences the author's philosophy of religious history. "The future hope of the world rests with the activity of good men who recognize their responsibility as fellow workers with God in shaping

the processes of history. Slowly but surely they learn to read the story of his providential concern for human affairs in the life and work of the mortals who struggle nobly to comprehend and control the rich resources of the universe. The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation but by dint of strenuous endeavour on the part of men who serve him from generation to generation throughout the evolving centuries" (Shirley Jackson Case—*The Philosophy of History*).

—LAMBERT J. PONSTEIN

*Principles and Practice of Preaching*, by Ilion T. Jones, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956. Pp. 272. \$3.75.

Ever hear of the "symphonic sermon"? [The] method is to find a few lines of a poem and a text of Scripture that contain the same theme and weave them into the sermon somewhat as a melody is woven into a symphony. . . . The unusual feature of the sermon is the way in which everything else revolves about the theme which [is repeated] dramatically at climactic moments in the sermon. . . . One example will suffice to indicate the procedure.

"The subject is 'Motherhood and Calvary'; the text 'When Jesus therefore saw his mother. . . .' (John 19:26 A.V.) The symphonic theme is as follows:

O Mother, when I think of thee,  
'Tis but a step to Calvary" (p. 113).

Perhaps it is only the illustration which is bad rather than the method itself. The fact remains, "When Jesus therefore saw his mother. . . ." is no text at all. Divorced from the remainder of the verse in which it occurs, it tells one precisely nothing. Effective? Perhaps. Clever? Possibly. But sound preaching, No.

I am disturbed by this book. Enough value is present to commend it as a collateral text in a course on preaching. Used along with the standard works on the subject, and under the guidance of

a teacher who is schooled in the methods generally employed in the Reformed pulpit, it would hold something of value for the Reformed seminary student while avoiding its pitfalls. This work has serious and basic weaknesses.

While the author touches upon the matters of expository and textual preaching, he advocates neither. On the contrary his advice is, "Use textual sermons sparingly." His point of view may be seen in the statement, "Someone has estimated that it would be difficult . . . to find in the whole Bible a hundred texts suitable for textual treatment." Some of the best loved preachers in the Reformed Church will be surprised to learn that they have been in error for the ten or twenty or thirty years they have been in the pulpit.

Your reviewer would do the author no injustice, yet he cannot but feel that while the author indicates preaching should be "true" to the Bible, he does not actually advocate Bible preaching. There is a difference of course. One can preach a sermon which is consonant with the general teachings of Scripture without actually preaching the Scriptures. The author's method of sermon construction points in this direction. The first step in sermon construction, he tells us, is the "idea." After one has determined what he wants to preach about, he then searches for a text which fits in with his predetermined thinking.

This book presents an underlying philosophy of preaching which is widely accepted today but which is utterly false in the opinion of your reviewer. This philosophy proposes that men can be made to listen to the sermon by clever approaches, dramatics, gimmicks, and the like. Scripture and historic Christianity hold that the power of preaching lies in the Word of God itself and in the application of that Word to the human heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. Eleven years of preaching do not constitute one an authority on the subject, but they have convinced your reviewer that the people in the pew are most attentive when the

preacher wrestles with the Word of God, setting forth its most basic truths with conviction and power, rather than seeking to capture attention with human devices.

I cannot but sense the contrast in the tone of this book when it is compared with Dr. Simon Blocker's *The Secret of Pulpit Power*. Dr. Blocker admonishes the preacher to set forth the whole counsel of God with power at all cost, whereas Dr. Jones seeks to advise young men in a methodology which will make their preaching attractive to the modern age. Dr. Blocker writes, "What is the use of getting overflowing crowds into the sanctuary and being called great and wonderful if all you do is to administer mental nose-drops and moral throat-spray? What is the ultimate value if you tickle their ears with dramatic or humorous stories and they alternately weep and laugh and go off to say, 'Isn't he wonderful?' A 'great' preacher who achieves what the world calls phenomenal success has a lot to answer for. You cannot hee-haw people into the Kingdom of God. The world, yea the Church, crucified Jesus and when they almost deify one of his preachers, it may be this preacher's church which is meant in Rev. 3:20 where Christ is on the outside knocking on locked doors to get in."

I commend this book to one kind of preacher: if you are determined to be only mildly evangelical, if you want to preach sermons with vague moral and ethical undertones but never to wrestle with the great issues of life and death, you will find in it a method for attracting the crowd—that is, if you possess the inherent cleverness to apply the method.

—GORDON H. GIROD

*New Testament Christianity*, by J. B. Phillips, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956. Pp. 107. \$2.25.

J. B. Phillips gives the reader of *New Testament Christianity* exactly what he

might expect from this versatile writer. Here is found an originality of thought and a freshness of expression which will interest the ordinary reader immensely. Before he lays this short treatise aside he will feel that the book is exceedingly worthwhile and he will want to come back to it from time to time.

The first chapter is entitled, "Explanation." This is not an apology for writing but rather an introduction to the theme which might be summarized as insisting that there was and is such a fact of history as New Testament Christianity. To adopt that same type of Christianity for our modern age is the underlying plea of the writer.

The four gospel writers wrote from their own viewpoints, but all wrote as though they knew that "the well-nigh incredible had happened in that the Creator had visited the world in human form." That New Testament Christianity is earnestly desired by thousands of people "who are sick and tired of narrowness and churchiness and who long for the fresh air of the New Testament." "The thing works" is the conclusion of the author as he insists upon this "fresh air from heaven." When adopted, it will result in a "true revival."

The author's fanciful presentation of the "Angel's Point of View" is stimulating and thought-provoking. In it there is presented a figurative picture of "the visited planet," from the vantage point of the angels. That "Light" which was good news made the angels cover their eyes—it was so bright. "If New Testament Christianity is to appear today with its power and joy and courage, men must recapture the basic conviction that this is a Visited Planet." Here is the clinching thought of the book.

Following this position come several chapters which indicate the method of regaining this lost Christianity of the New Testament. "The Faith Faculty" is the title of the next chapter. And what a chapter it is! This faculty would destroy "a dreary duty performance,



which, to say the least of it, is most unattractive." Modern man is urged "to exercise this long disused faculty." Then follows the ground of Hope which is more than "a shallow wish." "That hope is based on realities" is the contention of the author, and "in the end upon God the Great Reality." The chapter on "Love" has this pertinent sentence: "I have become absolutely convinced that what we need to recover, perhaps more than anything else is the conviction that God is not merely kindly disposed toward us, but that He is Love." The references to love in the gospel of John and the treatise of Paul upon love receive new meaning. Peace is portrayed as "not the absence of anxiety nor of strife but a solid foundation of life which makes for a positive human experience." That resolves "inner conflicts" and provides an "alignment with God's purpose." Being "one with Him in spirit and one with Him in purpose" provides "deep satisfaction of the peace of God."

Among the conclusions presented in *New Testament Christianity* are the following: The way of recovery for modern man lies undoubtedly through the recovery of the whole Christian Church. So a "united Church" can come. "Unconscious Christians" ought to be enlisted in this program. To see what is happening on the earth might well be viewed from the position of heaven. A faith faculty that "is not atrophied by physical and scientific schemes" but made alive by the spiritual application of the good news of the New Testament is the need of our day.

—MINER STEGENGA

*Glory Awaits Me*, by William Goulooze, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956. Pp. 112. \$2.00.

Being reminded by the sub-title "Memorial Edition" that the long list of inspirational books written by Dr. Goulooze has come to an end, we rejoice that the final trumpet sound records his soul's assurance: *Glory awaits me.*

Whatever comfort readers have derived from Dr. Goulooze's devotional writings produced during a decade of physical pain and frustrated hope, this volume is the fitting climax of them all.

*Glory Awaits Me* is a vision of the great beyond. It points to the future blessedness of those whose lives are "hid with Christ in God." It is a forward look to the Father's house with the many mansions. Heaven is not a fleeting dream and the Crown of Righteousness is no empty phrase. Eternal fellowship and blessed friendship await us with Christ in glory-land. Both poetry and prose direct us to a definite place, "in the center of which will be a definite being, God himself" (p. 79).

Although the writer does not permit his enthusiasm to surpass revelation, interesting comparisons and illustrations of that future glory add greatly to the reader's profit and joy. Based squarely on biblical grounds the thief on the cross, saved at the eleventh hour, is contrasted with Paul's dynamic years of service. This gives occasion to ponder on, "There will be no grades of honor in Heaven" (p. 107).

Again in describing the contrast between a mystic longing for future glory and the task of reflecting God's glory in the present life, we are not left in the dark. Thus truths are emphasized concerning the future life, which Christian people may hear at funerals, but hardly ever hear elsewhere. However, the present Christian life has its joys too. Hence the twofold division of this volume, "Glory Awaits Me in Preparation" and "Glory Awaits Me in Prospect," fully indicates the author's purpose for young and old to hold the end of their earthly journey more constantly in view. Surely, such emphasis should be welcomed by us all.

Some may criticize the frequent use of the author's personal references and experiences. For us that is no objection and needs no apology. This book is a personal testimony. To have known Dr. Goulooze in active life, and to have heard his unflinching witness in his trials



are evidences of his Christian humility. His personal experience of God's saving grace, and his personal claim of God's promises are described so that others may share them too. No personal pride is intended.

*Glory Awaits Me* is a renewed emphasis on "The Resurrection Hope." As such it recalls blessed memories of one who during years of affliction found spiritual strength in that assurance. Thus it will continue to be a present joy for God's people, who, though enduring tribulations, will be confirmed in their unfeigned faith of awaiting glory.

—JEAN A. VIS

## SHORT REVIEWS

*Membership in the Reformed Church* by Herman J. Ridder. Grand Rapids: Society for Reformed Publications, 1956. Pp. 3-48. \$.50.

Many people have the misconception that "joining" a church is similar to joining a Service Club, a P.T.A., or a Country Club. Others are entirely ignorant of what the church believes and teaches. Such misconceived ideas or lack of understanding can result in only one thing—an annual increase of absent and inactive members.

"It is the purpose of this little booklet to give helpful information to those interested in becoming members of the Reformed Church in America" (Page 3). The author offers this booklet as the basis for a course of study for a communicants' class. It is intended for information only, not for coercion. In the introduction several suggestions are offered so as to make the most profitable use from the booklet. The material presented is intended for a guide. Much time should be devoted to discussion.

There are six chapters. They are entitled: "What It Means to Be a Christian." "Why a Christian Ought to Become a Church Member." "Helps in Maintaining the Christian Life." "Beliefs of the Reformed Church." "Organization and Attitudes of the Reformed Church." "Mutual Obligations."

Where it is not customary for churches to conduct a communicants' class, pastors and consistories might well consider presenting a copy of this booklet to each one who is received upon confession of faith. A copy would also be helpful to those who come into the Reformed Church by transfer of membership.

*We Are the Lord's* by Jean Vis. Grand Rapids: Society for Reformed Publications, 1955. Pp. 9-175. \$.250.

Having completed his active ministry to his listening audience, the author now offers his studies on the Heidelberg Catechism to his reading audience. The author makes no attempt at being exhaustive in his treatment of the Lord's Days of the Heidelberg. Rather he aims at being suggestive. Approximately two pages are devoted to the discussion of each of the Lord's Days.

The subject matter is presented in a very logical and systematic manner, which is particularly appealing to the reader. References are liberally made to the scriptural passages upon which the answers of the Catechism are based. Also, there are frequent referrals to the original languages, which the author uses in such a way so as to give new insights of meaning to the reader.

This volume can be used in a number of ways. The preacher will discover grist for his homiletical mill. The pastor might well use it as a study guide for a men's brotherhood or a prayer meeting group. It could be used for a young people's catechism class. In areas where the doctrines of the Reformed Church are little-known, the book could be used to acquaint our members with what we believe as taught in the Word of God.

*Stand Fast* by John J. Arnold. Grand Rapids: Society for Reformed Publications, 1955. Pp. 5-31. \$.35.

Many churches and pastors give prospective servicemen devotional helps

shortly before they leave home. The author has served as a Chaplain in the U.S.N.R. upon his graduation from Western Seminary. It is upon the basis of his experience as a military officer that he has written this booklet.

The booklet is divided into eleven chapters. A review as brief as this does not allow the reviewer to present an analysis of each chapter. In this reviewer's estimation, however, there are a few which rise in stature above the others. The chapter entitled "The Leader" points out Jesus Christ our Lord as the Commander-in-Chief. A good officer has three qualifications: he knows the enemy; he knows and cares for his men; he associates with the men under his command. Our service personnel are directed to follow the Lord who is a Leader without equal.

"Supply Line" is another very helpful chapter. The success of an army depends upon its supply line. God also has certain roads by which he sends special blessings to us. Keep the supply lines open and functioning! They are: private devotional life, public worship, and the faithful use of the sacraments.

"Land Mines" warns the servicemen of the temptations he will face. One such mine takes the form of spiritual pride. In other mines Satan says, "It won't matter just this once; but everyone else is doing it; no one will ever know." The devil is skillful in the use of land mines.

The booklet concludes with two well-chosen chapters entitled "Bonus" and "Taps." The terms used are those of the military; the style is simple for all to be able to understand; the tone is warm and evangelical. It deserves wide distribution among our young people who are in military service.

*Comfort for the Sorrowing* by William Goulouze. Holland: The Church Press, 1955. Pp. 3-24. \$.25.

Although this publication does not comprise many pages, the author presents a very comprehensive discussion of the problem of sorrow. The mind of the reader is focused continually upon God—his presence and his promises. The entire problem is discussed fully, frankly and solved scripturally. Extensive use is made of scripture passages which the sorrowing one should read.

The booklet deserves to be used extensively by the pastor in his ministry to the sorrowing sheep of his flock. It will help the pastor to answer the question, "What shall I say?" Here is a compilation rather of what God says. Also, a copy might be given to each family where death has come as an unwelcome guest.

*What Jesus Means to Me* by William Goulouze. Holland: The Church Press, 1955. Pp. 3-24. \$.25.

For several years the author lived upon the brink of death. This booklet continues as his living testimony of what Jesus was to him and can be to everyone who accepts him by faith. The author's witness is given primarily in three ways: personal testimony, the quotation of appropriate hymns and the quotation of selected scripture passages.

What does Jesus do? He Helps in Sickness; Comforts in Sorrow; Sustains When Tempted; Lives for Me; Dies for Me; Arose for Me; Is My Savior; Gives Peace; Offers Opportunities for Stewardship; Invites Me to Heaven. These are the principal subjects that are discussed.

—HENRY A. MOUW

